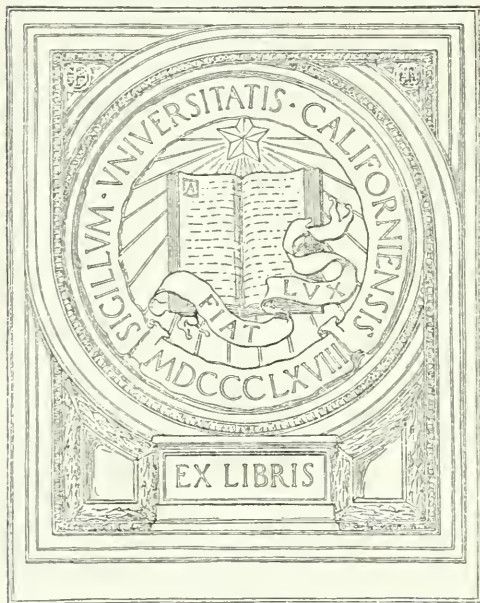




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# HISTORY OF OREGON



# HISTORY OF OREGON

## THE GROWTH OF AN AMERICAN STATE

BY  
HORACE S. LYMAN

ASSOCIATE BOARD OF EDITORS  
HARVEY W. SCOTT      CHARLES B. BELLINGER  
AND  
FREDERIC G. YOUNG

VOLUME THREE



THE NORTH PACIFIC PUBLISHING SOCIETY  
NEW YORK  
MCMIII



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Publication Office  
136 Liberty Street.  
New York, N. Y., U. S. A.

2787  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE





THE scene of the history now shifts from enterprises by sea. The British monopoly, holding Oregon for the most energetic empire of the world, is now confronted by a people. It is therefore worth while, as we take a new center, and deal with new influences and characters, to recall briefly some of the steps previously narrated. This will not only refresh the memory, but will throw the scene into a new perspective and enable us to estimate more correctly the work performed by the first individual Americans—who, diverse as they were, were all animated by one spirit. “They went every one straight forward; whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.”

At the end of the period of discovery the British had clearly outclassed all others, and Vancouver seemed to himself to have fixed British possession, along with British nomenclature, upon the immense territory of Oregon. At the end of the period of development of the fur trade the British again seemed to have outclassed all others, and only an occasional and wandering American ship visited the shores of the Pacific Coast from San Francisco Bay to the Aleutian Islands. Gradually Oregon, Alaska and the Hawaiians had been gathered to the long arms of McLoughlin; and the stockholders of the fur company in London were annually receiving a wealth to be reckoned by the millions, and were so much impressed with the value of this trade that they had

no other expectation than to make it permanent. The brilliant scheme of Astor had fallen solidly to their interest. The route from Canada over the Rockies to the Columbia flanked all the movements of the Americans; and the route from the Columbia to London completed a circumnavigation of the globe—all water except a few portages—that will shed never-fading luster upon the enterprise of the English nation. McLoughlin, moreover, was planting without opposition a colony of British in the heart of what was then considered the best, and perhaps the only, inhabitable part of Oregon. Whatever his intention, it was the core of a British colony. A settlement was thus already begun in the British interest in the very territory which the Americans might some time claim, whose influence would extend, as Dr. McLoughlin said, to San Francisco Bay. It was in truth well calculated to become a “buffer State,” with British ideas and tendencies, shielding the fur territory north of the Columbia from encroachment by Americans, pre-occupying for the British the country south of the Columbia, and thus closing the gap to the Spanish possessions. Some such idea, more or less clear, both to McLoughlin, and to Simpson in Canada, and Pelly in London, must have been entertained when this settlement was allowed to be formed. To McLoughlin the humanitarian idea of providing for a happy age for his old servants, and a civilized environment for their children, was undoubtedly uppermost; while to Simpson and Pelly

such a settlement of their old servants must have seemed a good stroke to finally shut out America from all pretensions to territory on the Pacific Coast.

As has already been suggested, and as seen in the later unfoldings of our history, the prize in view was not simply the narrow strip between the Columbia River and the Spanish line; it was possession, or paramountcy, of the Pacific Coast; and not simply of the Pacific Coast, indeed, but of the Pacific Ocean. The central point was the Columbia River. With this, as the later development shows, went all. The navigation of this river the British already determined never to yield; and so much as they could control southward, by actual territorial occupation, or by a semi-British colony, they would add; as by the productions of this colony they already were absorbing and controlling the commerce of all the Russian possessions on the American coast; and of the Sandwich Islands, which would soon become Briticized through the influence of their trade.

But at this point they began to meet the multiple life of a people. The first encounters were with individuals. The record of the first American movements overland is of failure. The British habitually refer to these first pioneers of enterprise as "adventurers." This was not far wrong; although the reproach of unstable character implied in the term was not in all cases merited. It was particularly those Americans who attempted to break over the

chain of the Rocky Mountains, and to enjoy the rich trapping to be found on the Snake River; or who with still bolder intent pushed on to the Columbia, and attempted competition with the British monopoly on the Pacific, that were given this term of opprobrium, and were regarded as intruders; though under treaty stipulations they had the same right in all the territory as the British.

The movement of the American people toward the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean began with the fur companies operating from St. Louis, and making annual excursions up the Missouri, or the Platte, to a rendezvous in the Rocky Mountains, and returning in the autumn. Trappers were scattered out in every direction, who sought particularly the heads of the rivers, where the beaver had built their villages. These industrious and intelligent animals were their partners, as well as prey. They sought the most secluded spots; and the trapper, with traps, rifle and butcher knife, and perhaps a frying pan, clambered over the ridges, and down into the canyons, often alone, tending his traps day after day, and approximating ever, more and more, in feeling and appearance to the savage country about him. Courage, love of liberty, hardihood, unimpaired faculties of sight, hearing, muscle and nerve were the prerequisites. Failure at anyone of these points would speedily lead to a termination of career. Aside from the fatigues and hardships of the march, there were the wild animals, some of which were formidable foes;

the ever watchful Indians, certain tribes of whom were always enemies; and the stern competition of rival trappers, who often misled and deceived each other, and among whom it was a principle to compete for the first trade of the season with the Indians and free trappers at the various rendezvous. However, the successful trapper was not the mere perfect human animal, or a man who had all the senses developed to the full, and was endowed with sleepless vigilance and dare-devil boldness. He must also have cool judgment, sagacity born of quick reasoning faculties, and at least that humanity that never endangered his own life, or sacrificed that of others, except as the last extremity. Kit Carson, who will perhaps live as the best type of the Rocky Mountain trapper, was a cool and reflective man. J. L. Meek, of another type, and a more blustering and consequential character, was highly endowed with intellect, and developed in later life a large fund of broad ideas. Nevertheless, that a large proportion of the trappers were of the reckless order, who held life cheap, whether of their own or of others, is indicated in the large proportion of those who entered the service perishing before they returned; three-fifths, it is said, never came back.

As the movement of trappers into the Rocky Mountains was the second of those remarkable impressions made upon the American mind, the first being the discoveries on the Northwest Coast, it is worth while noticing here the kind of character that



the Rocky Mountain trapping life developed. By Washington Irving, who is not a profound thinker, but a good observer, a striking contrast is noticed between the American trapper, who broke the way to far-off Oregon, and the French trapper, who, from Canada, had already possessed the north and held the routes over the Rockies and Selkirks to the Columbia and New Caledonia. This description has the added historical value of having been written in 1843, from data gathered much earlier, and when American fortunes seemed at so low an ebb that this author, who commanded the ear of both America and Europe, charged our government with "unfortunate supineness," and said that "By that supineness the sovereignty in the country [that of the whole Columbia Valley] has been virtually lost to the United States." This is his rather doleful theme in starting out to record in detail the still further failure of Captain Bonneville. He gives a spirited description of the trappers, apparently not yet perceiving that the redemption of Oregon, for which he eagerly longed, was not to be effected by governmental activity, but largely by just that American character which, for almost one generation, was being slowly developed on the plains and in the Rocky Mountains. It was not by "a small military force" to reinstate Astor at Astoria, but by an evolution of a great frontier population, and, in fact, of the whole American people, that the result was to be attained.

He says:—"A totally different class has now

sprung up; the 'Mountaineers'; the traders and trappers that scale the vast mountain chains, and pursue their hazardous vocations amid their wild recesses. They move from place to place on horseback. The equestrian exercises, therefore, in which they are engaged, the nature of the country which they traverse, vast plains and mountains, pure and exhilarating atmospheric qualities, seem to make them physically and mentally a more mercurial race than the fur traders and trappers of former days, the self-vaunting 'men of the north.' We find them accordingly, hardy, lithe, vigorous and active; extravagant in word and thought and deed; heedless of hardship; daring of danger; prodigal of the present, and thoughtless of the future.

"A difference is to be perceived even between these mountain hunters and those of the lower regions along the waters of the Missouri. The latter, generally French creoles, live comfortably in cabins and log huts, well sheltered from the inclemencies of the seasons. They are within reach of frequent supplies from the settlements; their life is comparatively free from danger, and from most of the vicissitudes of the upper wilderness. The consequence is, they are less hardy, self-dependent and game-spirited than the mountaineer. If the latter by chance comes among them on his way to and from the settlements, he is like a game-cock among the common roosters of the poultry yard. . . .

"There is perhaps no class of men on the face of

the earth, says Captain Bonneville, who led a life of more continued exertion, peril, excitement, and who are more enamoured of their occupations, than the free trappers of the West. No toil, no danger, no privation, can turn the trapper from his pursuit. His passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. . . . The French trapper is represented as a lighter, softer, more self-indulgent kind of a man. He must have his Indian wife, his lodge, and his petty conveniences. He is gay and thoughtless, takes little heed of landmarks, depends upon his leaders and companions to think for the common weal, and, if left to himself, is easily perplexed and lost.

“ The American trapper stands by himself, and is peerless for the service of the wilderness. Drop him in the midst of a prairie, or the heart of a mountain, and he is never at a loss. He notices every landmark; can retrace his route through the most monotonous plains, or the most perplexed labyrinths of the mountains; no danger or difficulty can appal him, and he scorns to complain under any privations. In equipping the two kinds of trappers, the creole and Canadian are apt to prefer the light fusee; the American always grasps his rifle; he despises what he calls ‘ a shot gun.’ We give these estimates on the authority of a trader of long experience, and a foreigner by birth. ‘ I consider one American,’ said he, ‘ equal to three Canadians in point of sagacity, aptness at resources, self-dependence, and fearless-

ness of spirit. In fact no one can cope with him as a stark tramper of the wilderness."

The above estimate, while not probably doing full justice to the French, many of whom on the plains and on horseback showed the very same qualities as attributed to the Americans, well indicates the new class of men developed in the Rocky Mountains and on the plains between the years 1807 and 1842, who led the van of the American people toward the Pacific. Perhaps nothing in all the above description is more characteristic than that they were "thoughtless of the future; prodigal of the present." This was the charm of the life to them. It was an intense present existence unconfined by the past, and unlimited by the future. It was the Titan touching the earth again; the civilized man becoming once more a savage, indulging his nature to its limit, and often quaffing the cup of life at a draught. It was in one view a degeneration, but before every evolution is a period of dissolution; traditions are broken; right and wrong are disregarded, or at least conventional right is forgotten. Life emerges again in new and grander proportions. This period of metamorphosis, as has often and happily been the case in Anglo-Saxon communities, was in America confined to a small part of the country, and of the population; yet the influence extended from the Rocky Mountains westward to the Pacific, and reacted eastward to the Atlantic. Every American grew greater with the free trappers that scoured the Rocky Moun-

tains, and with the expanding nation that learned from the men of the west the possibilities that came with bodily freedom.

Without delaying too long upon these characteristics, the significance of which will appear still further as the history progresses, a brief account will now be given of the operations of the American trappers and traders from St. Louis through the Rocky Mountain country. Some, indeed, pressed to the Pacific Ocean; but the main round was between the upper Missouri and Santa Fé.

There were three or four main rendezvous; that on Green River being the principal one; while Brown's Hole, Pierre's Hole, Ogden's Hole and Jackson's Hole, were some of the others. These two names, "Rendezvous" and "Hole," are highly indicative of the trapper's conceptions. The former indicates the French element in the thought and life. It was simply the assembling place, agreed upon and made known the year beforehand, and to which the trappers moved with their winter's catch, to meet the pack, or wagon trains, from St. Louis, hurrying as soon as weather permitted to forestall one another; and to which Indians of all tribes resorted. Here was the trading, carousing, gambling, the races and fights, dead bodies sometimes being so common over the games that upon them the cards were laid down. The word "Hole" indicates the pure Saxon; being somewhat humorous, and meaning a hollow, or possibly a vast and grand depres-

sion in the mountains; but a term attractive to the trapper as indicating a snug retreat, where he might house up over winter; and pleasing him also with the suggestion that a break in the mountain ranges, great enough to be the rotunda for Jupiter and all the gods of Greece, was just about the right size for a hole for *him*.

The Americans operating in the Rocky Mountains during this period of adventure were the old American Fur Company, still nominally under the control of John Jacob Astor, of New York, but conducted by Ramsay Crooks, who has been mentioned in the previous volume; the old Missouri Fur Company, formed under William Clark, Manuel Lisa and others, which was disbanded in 1812, but was resuscitated some years later; the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, under Wm. H. Ashley, called by Irving "General" Ashley; and various individuals, as Captain Bonneville.

Following is a brief résumé of the operations of these companies, being necessarily mentioned here as showing the grand drift of the American people westward.

April 25, 1807, Ezekiel Williams, as already mentioned, with twenty Missourians, left St. Louis for the Mandan country, in compliance with the promise of Lewis and Clark that the government would return their chief, Big White, and his wife and son, if he would visit Washington, according to the invitation of President Jefferson. The promise was car-



ried out, and the chief escorted home in safety. The party, although under government commission, was also equipped for trapping; one of Jefferson's purposes in the Lewis and Clark expedition being to establish friendly relations with the distant Indian tribes and to open up trade. In this party was Carson, mentioned elsewhere; and Rose, the Mississippi River pirate, who left the company to live with the Crows, and who is mentioned by Hunt. Williams's party met with all but annihilation from the Indians; five were killed by Blackfeet on the Yellowstone; and on the Arkansas only three survived the attack of the Comanches. Of these Williams himself, coming to a river supposed to be the Rio Grande, followed down, coming out at last at Cooper's Fort on the Missouri; the two others, Work and Spencer, followed the stream upward, reached the Colorado, which they descended, met a Santa Fé party going to Los Angeles, which they accompanied, and returned the next year; but not until fifteen years did they reach home again.

In 1808 the Missouri Fur Company was organized at St. Louis, with Manuel Lisa, Pierre Chouteau, Sr., William Clark, Sylvester Labadie, Pierre Menard, and Auguste P. Chouteau, with capital of \$40,000. Alexander Henry was sent that year to establish a post at the forks of the Missouri, but was driven away by the Blackfeet, and crossing the range, erected in 1809, a post on the Henry Fork of the Snake River.

In 1810 appeared Hunt, of the Pacific Fur Company, at St. Louis, and organized the company that made the overland trip to co-operate with the party by sea which reached Astoria in March, 1811. Hunt consumed the entire year of 1811, and not until February of 1812, reached Astoria. Among his party were Louis Labonte, Joseph Gervais, Dubruil and others, who became early settlers of Oregon. He picked up a number of trappers in the mountains; Alexander Carson, Ramsay Crooks, McClellan and others joining the company as it advanced.

In 1821, according to Bancroft, though apparently without according this much historical standing, Samuel Ruddock was one of a party which set out "the middle of May, forded the Platte below its forks, and turning southward reached Santa Fé the 8th of June. Crossing the Rio del Norte they then took a N. W. direction on the north bank of the river Chamas, and over the mountains reached Lake Trinidad; and then pursuing the same direction across the upper branches of the Rio Colorado of California, reached Lake Timpanagos,\* source of the Multnomah of Lewis and Clark. Following the River Timpanagos, they reached the mouth of the Columbia August 1st, making the journey from the Missouri in 79 days." This mythical account is given as an interesting illustration of conclusions based on conjecture. Clark suggested that the Multnomah, or Willamette, watered the whole country

\* A map of the internal provinces of New Spain, given with Coues' "Expedition of Z. M. Pike," practically identifies this with Great Salt Lake.—*Cor. Wyeth's Oregon Expedition.*

as far south as to the Gulf of California. His map showed this river as rising somewhere in Nevada or Utah. It was natural, or inevitable, that someone would announce the discovery of the lake in which the river rose; these vague accounts of Great Salt Lake offered the suggestion of the lake giving birth to the Multnomah. Of course a broad, smooth, speedy route from that source to the Columbia would accompany any such apochryphal discovery. Rud-dock was not the only one who held this suggestion; Tarascon, as seen soon, believing that a route by the Willamette from the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the Columbia might be found. Bancroft gives as his authority a House report of May 15, 1826.

In 1822 the most vigorous of all the companies was formed. This was the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, organized under William H. Ashley, of St. Louis. He is described as a man of note, bearing the title "General," and a shrewd Yankee long acquainted with the fur trade. His operations were very successful. With Henry he built a fort on the Yellowstone the same year. In 1823 he formed a party of twenty-eight men and started for the mountains with the intention of crossing the Rockies, but on the way was attacked by the Aricaras, who killed fourteen and wounded ten of his men. The next year, 1824, with Green, for whom [Bancroft] Green River was named, he ascended the Platte and Sweet-water with a pack train, found the South Pass, and

reached the Green River, the upper fork of the Colorado, thus reaching the Pacific drainage. Here on this beautiful water course he made a rendezvous, having goods from 300 pack mules. The idea seems to have originated with him, or with his lieutenant, William Sublette, to take the part of the weaker Indian tribes of the Rocky Mountains and punish the enemies of the Americans. We find at least that almost as soon as this strong party of Rocky Mountain men had crossed the summit and had opened traffic with the more distant tribes, a call was made for men and Indian allies to proceed to the Blackfoot country and attack that always hostile tribe and the hereditary enemies of the Shoshones. William Sublette led the trappers, who assembled to the number of 300, together with a large force of Shoshones, who hitherto unarmed, or poorly armed, had been driven into the mountain retreats, as was told to Lewis and Clark by Cameahwait, and were now only too glad to turn invader and revenge themselves for long years of misfortunes and unnumbered injuries. The campaign proved entirely successful, Sublette and party returning with 170 Blackfoot scalps, while of the whites but eight were wounded and the Shoshones lost but eleven. This policy and its success had its bearing upon opening the route to the Pacific. The more northern tribes, who were the stronger and had been brought under the influence of the British companies to some extent, that is, the Sioux, Blackfeet, Crows and to some extent the Aricaras and Minites.

remained enemies; while the Osage, Pawnee, Kansas, Shoshones and Nez Perces, Flatheads, and for a time the Cayuses, remained friends to the whites. The Sioux, it should be said, like the Cayuses, wavered between friendship and hostility; but with these exceptions the general policy of the American trappers was to place the balance of power with the weaker tribes, who without them would speedily fall victims to the Blackfoot, Crows or Sioux, and thus managed to have ever efficient and trusty allies. It was highly important also that the Indians on the headwaters of the rivers, that is, the more distant tribes, should be friendly and faithful. There the trappers spread out singly or in small squads, while on the plains and through the Sioux country they usually went in companies large enough to resist attack. The effect of this policy was to make a continuous line of friendly tribes from St. Louis up the Missouri and Platte and Sweetwater; over the Green River, and on to the Snake and Columbia.

In 1825 Ashley led from the Missouri River, on the annual journey, 125 men, crossed the mountains, reached Great Salt Lake and discovered Lake Utah. He built a fort, leaving 100 men. Two years later a six pounder cannon was drawn to this fort, showing the practicability of a wagon route. During the three years that Ashley operated in the Rocky Mountains he took out from the Snake River country \$180,000 worth of furs. Green, who had been with him, trapped west of Salt Lake until 1829.

The idea of a wagon road to the Pacific was presented to Congress in 1824 by L. A. Tarascon, who had been influenced by the surmises of Clark to think that the head of the Willamette was not far from the Salt Lake country. He said: "I do not think I am mistaken, and my opinion is that the way is marked by nature. By the St. Peters you reach Lake Travers; from thence, now in carriage or by wagon, but in time all the way by water, you cross to the mouth of the Cheyenne; you ascend said river; you take the Big Horn; you are at the southern gap of the Rocky Mountains in forty-two degrees; you descend either the Lewis River or the Multnomah, or cross the country; you are at the bay (of the Columbia)."

A long tour of exploration was begun in 1823 by the Missouri Fur Company, revived under Lisa, Hempstead and Perkins. A party under Jones and Immuel, of this company, was attacked by the Blackfeet, and the leaders and several others were killed. In 1827, Pileher, for this company, crossed the Rockies with forty-five men and 100 horses and wintered on Green River. The next spring he went northward along the bases of the mountains, and reaching Flathead Lake wintered there; renewing his journey the next year by way of Colville and the main Columbia he crossed the mountains eastward and returned by the Athabasca, Red River, and the Missouri.

With Ashley, of the Rocky Mountain Company, there was a mulatto, James P. Beckwourth, who be-



came well known on the plains. His mother was a negro woman, and a slave. While still a child Beckwourth had seen his playmates killed by a band of Indians, and having thus early acquired a hatred of these people, determined to follow them upon the plains. He became known as an Indian fighter, though he not infrequently made up and lived with the Crows as a chief.

On retirement of Ashley in 1827—his death occurring near Booneville in 1838—the command of the company fell to William Sublette, with Jedediah S. Smith and David E. Jackson as lieutenants.

The adventures of Smith more nearly relate to Oregon, as upon one of his tours he reached the Pacific and Fort Vancouver. He began this in 1824, taking a little party of five men and trapping on the Snake River, thus breaking into the monopoly of the British. He passed the winter at the British post among the Flatheads. Returning in 1825, he headed another expedition westward, reaching in 1827 San Francisco Bay. The next season he started northward for Oregon, planning no doubt to return to Missouri by way of the Snake. He took the route by the ocean beach. All was well and the natives were friendly, and by the time he reached the mouth of the Umpqua a pack worth \$20,000 was gathered. Here the party was attacked by the Indians, apparently without provocation, just as they were finishing their breakfasts, and while Smith himself was looking for a crossing of the river. Besides Smith three

only escaped: Black, a powerful man, who resisted his assailants, and Turner, also a man of strong build, who, with a half burned pole from the fire, killed four of the Umpqua.\* Smith finally reached Fort Vancouver, followed soon by the two others. Although considered an intruder he was received with great kindness by McLoughlin; a party under Thomas McKay was dispatched at once, and all the furs bearing his mark found among the Indians were restored to Smith, who sold them to McLoughlin for orders on London.

McLoughlin has given the following account of the affair, and his part in retrieving the property. He says (Document published in *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, June, 1900): "The first Americans since 1814 who crossed to the west of the Rocky Mountains was (at least to our knowledge) Mr. Jedediah Smith with five trappers, who, having met some of the Hudson's Bay Company on the headwaters of Snake River, came with them to the Hudson's Bay post at the Flatheads, where they passed the winter. In 1825 he returned to join his people, and in 1826 he brought a large party of his countrymen to hunt in the Snake country, where they (Americans) have been ever since. In 1826, and up to 1828, there were constantly five or six hundred; but now that beaver are scarce there are only fifty. In 1827 Mr. Smith pushed his trapping parties to the Bay of San Francisco, in California, and, in endeavouring to make his

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\* "A little Englishman" is also mentioned as a survivor.

way here from California in 1828, fifteen of his men were murdered by the Umpqua Indians, when he with only three of his men reached Vancouver, from whence, in the spring of 1829, he proceeded to join his countrymen in the Snake country."

He gives a more circumstantial account in the document published in 1880 by the Pioneer Society, saying: "One night in August, 1828, I was surprised by the Indians making a great noise at the gate of the fort, saying they had brought an American. The gate was opened and the man was brought in, but was so affected that he could not speak. After sitting down some minutes to recover himself, he told us he was, he thought, the only survivor of a party of eighteen men conducted by Jedediah Smith. All the rest, he thought, were murdered. The party left San Francisco bound to the rendezvous at the Salt Lake. They ascended the Sacramento Valley, but finding no opening to cross the mountains to go east, they bent their course to the coast, which they reached at the mouth of Rogue River, then came along the beach to the Umpqua, where the Indians stole their axe, and as it was the only one they had, and which they absolutely required to make rafts to cross the river, they took the chief prisoner, and their axe was returned. Early the following morning Smith started in a canoe with two men and an Indian, and left orders as usual to let no Indians come into camp. But to gratify their passion for women the men neglected to follow the order, allowed the Indians to come into

camp, and at an Indian yell five or six Indians fell on each white man.

“ At the time the narrator, Black, was out of the crowd, and had just finished cleaning and loading his rifle; three Indians jumped on him, but he shook them off, and seeing all his comrades struggling on the ground and the Indians stabbing them, he fired on the crowd and rushed to the woods, pursued by the Indians, but fortunately escaped; swam across the Umpqua and (went) northward in the hopes of reaching the Columbia, where he knew we were. But broken down by hunger and misery, as he had no food but a few wild berries which he found on the beach, he determined to give himself up to the Killimoux, a tribe on the coast at Cape Lookout, who treated him with great humanity, relieved his wants and brought him to the fort, for which, in case whites might again fall into their power, and to induce them to act kindly to them, I rewarded them most liberally. But as Smith and his two men might have escaped, and if we made no search for them— At break of day the next morning I sent Indian runners with tobacco to the Willamette chiefs to tell them to send their people in search of Smith and his two men, and if they found them to bring them to the fort and I would pay them, and telling them if any Indians hurt these men we would punish them, and immediately equipped a strong party of forty well armed men. But as our men were embarking, to our great joy Smith and his two men arrived.

“ I then arranged as strong a party as we could to recover all we could of Smith’s property. . . . The plan was that the officer was, as usual, to invite the Indians to bring their furs to trade, just as if nothing had happened; count the furs, but as the American trappers mark all their skins, give them to Mr. Smith and not pay the Indians for them; that they got them by murdering Smith’s people. . . . They denied having murdered Smith’s people, but admitted they bought them of the murderers. The officers told them they must look to the murderers for payment. . . . In this way we recovered property for Mr. Smith to the amount of three thousand two hundred dollars, without any expense to him; and which was done from a principle of Christian duty and as a lesson to the Indians that they could not wrong the whites with impunity.”

Bancroft states that McLoughlin charged Smith at the rate of \$60 per year for the services of the men, and four dollars for any horses lost on the expedition; and he bought the goods on London exchange. Gray states that at the Umpqua “ Smith and his party were met by a professedly friendly party of Indians who murdered his men, seized his furs and delivered them to a party of men sent by the Hudson’s Bay Company under Mr. John McLeod and Thomas McKay to receive the furs and pay the Indians for their services—as learned by the writer from eye witnesses.” Smith, who returned east and continued his trapping, does not seem to have enter-

tained any suspicion of wrong on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company, as he insisted that the Rocky Mountain Fur Company should retire from the region claimed by the British—out of gratitude for his deliverance. Although having dissolved his partnership in 1830, Smith in 1831 outfitted a party for Santa Fé, but before reaching his destination was attacked and killed by Comanches—a most eventful career being thus terminated. Jedediah Smith was a man of piety, usually beginning a day's journey with prayer with his men.

In 1830 the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was reorganized, Smith, William Sublette and Jackson retiring, and James Bridger, Milton Sublette, Frapp, Fitzpatrick and Jervais taking their places. This was preparatory to a vigorous competition with the Hudson's Bay Company in the Valley of the Snake. Fitzpatrick, a name afterward noted among the emigrants as pilot, led a party to Ogden's Hole, where Peter Skeen Ogden had made a rendezvous for the Hudson's Bay Company, and offered a stock of goods, including liquors, in competition. The price of \$5 a pound for beaver skins was offered, with tobacco at \$2 a pound, alcohol at \$2 a pint, blankets at \$25 and shirts at \$5. Here were soon re-enacted scenes like those described in the earlier days of the Northwest Company. Trappers that could spend a thousand dollars a day were the envy of all; debauchery and disorder among a motley collection of savages and rival trappers of half a dozen different and



by no means harmonious nationalities must have reached a furious height.

In addition to the Americans mentioned in the foregoing there were some who later drifted westward, some reaching Oregon. These have been spoken of as typical Rocky Mountain men and should be mentioned. One was Thomas L. Smith,\* known as "Pegleg" Smith, who left his Kentucky home while a youth of but sixteen, and after serving his time as flatboatman on the Mississippi, struck for the Indian country, taking service with St. Vrain and Laclede for Santa Fé. He was afterward on the Green River, among the Moquis and other tribes. He lost his leg and was left to die on the Platte in 1828, but recovered and supplied himself with a wooden stump, which he would, on provocation, unstrap and lay about him with effect when in a passion, but not quite to the shooting point. He was seen by John Minto in the Snake country in 1844, still a vigorous man, well dressed, and having much the appearance of a Mississippi captain.

George W. Ebberts was also a native of Kentucky, and in 1828 found himself at St. Louis. Here he was to be married to a French girl, but his mother objecting to the match he relinquished the idea and went to the Rocky Mountains. He was not the sole disappointed swain that thus sought to ease a fond regret. Joseph L. Meek, who took a large and useful part in Oregon history, and like Ebberts became an Oregon

\* This trapper is not to be confounded with Jedediah Smith, previously mentioned. "Pegleg" was a very different character from the correct and often affluent trader.





JOSEPH L. MEEK



pioneer, came to the Rocky Mountains in 1829. He was from Virginia, leaving home to escape an uncongenial stepmother, and finally brought up with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Robert Newell was the third of a trio who made a ten years' apprenticeship in the Rocky Mountains a preparation to citizenship in Oregon.

Perhaps the crowning work of the Rocky Mountain Company, considered in view of lasting results and its effect upon the advance of civilization, was breaking a wagon road to the continental divide. This was done in 1829, when eighty-one mounted men, having also ten wagons, each drawn by five mules, and two light mule carts, set out April 10 from St. Louis; the course taken was directly west to the Missouri border; then for the Platte. By July 10 they reached the head of the Wind River; the wagons encountered no difficulty beyond that of crossing gullies, and traveled fifteen to twenty-five miles a day. They returned with loads of furs, reaching St. Louis October 10. They reported to the Secretary of War that they could have crossed the mountains, and this was noticed by President Jackson in a message to the House of Representatives.



## CHAPTER II

### PERIOD OF AGITATION AND ADVENTURE





**W**HILE this somewhat slow and erratic movement westward was going on in the Rocky Mountain country, and a class of mountaineers was being developed who later furnished the first

American citizens of Oregon, though as yet the Rocky Mountain trappers did not attempt more than excursions into the preserve of the British on the Snake River, there was also going on upon the very extreme of the Atlantic seaboard an agitation that about the year 1832 took practical shape, giving rise to, or at least antedating, three separate expeditions. This agitation was more or less directly the beginning of bringing to Oregon some twenty or thirty stalwart Americans who proved absolutely essential to the American occupation of Oregon; to agitation in Congress which led the way to final purpose on the part of the government to hold Oregon, and to a promotion of missionary enterprise which completed American occupation.

Following back these three lines of enterprise or effort—commercial expeditions, discussion in Congress and missionary movements—we find them all combined in the brain of one man. Very little credit has been given to this man, and he has been almost uniformly represented as a mere dreamer, with no credit due except that of foreseeing what was about to be, and placing in print what he believed practical men would accomplish. This man was Hall J. Kelley, of Boston, who, until December, 1901, in an arti-

cle by Mrs. Frances Fuller Victor, has seldom been noticed appreciatively or even taken seriously by the historian. Kelley was undoubtedly one of those minds ideal rather than practical, who give suggestions which more executive persons readily pick up and carry out, without even thanks to the giver; but there is ample evidence that he was first of all to perceive and publish views of the value of Oregon as a component part of the American Union; and directly to his efforts are due much that appeared in Congress and the migration to Oregon of some of her most resolute pioneers.

In 1815, when Kelley took up the study and agitation of the ownership of Oregon, and proposed to hold it by American occupation, he was a slender young man, but had already reached such attainment as to have the prospect of even a brilliant literary, or greatly useful humanitarian, career. He was born in New Hampshire in 1798, was a graduate at Middlebury, Conn., and also of Harvard, from which he received his master's degree. He became a school master in Boston, attempting to reduce teaching to a science, and publishing "The American Instructor," which was highly thought of as a contribution to the art of pedagogy. He helped to found the Boston Young Men's Education Society, and his mind took a strongly humanitarian bent. He studied the social evil and assisted in establishing the Refuge Society. He was chiefly instrumental in forming the first Sunday School in America, and wrote the first Sunday

School book. All these efforts, requiring the confidence of the public, and of educated persons, show a mind of fine order, highly progressive and probably erratic; but still neither unsound nor impractical. That he gradually withdrew his efforts from these valuable and congenial labors to take up the study of Oregon, and promulgate what proved to be the only practical way to maintain the interests of Americans here, is a work for which Oregon at this late day, and all the Union, should feel grateful, although in his actual movements he shows the more or less hesitating grasp of the man born a thinker rather than an actor.

The three expeditions that were antedated by, and perhaps grew out of his agitation, were his own, attempted first in 1828, and again in 1831, and finally accomplished in 1832; that of Bonneville, 1832, which was perhaps but remotely connected with Kelley's effort, and belongs in greater part to the Rocky Mountain movements, and that of Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1832, and repeated in 1834. Kelley began studying the question in 1815, inspired no doubt by the atmosphere of New England, which was itself a new society set free from old world customs "Bitter as life and heavy as frost." Profoundly impressed with the desire of social regeneration, he conceived that the truer and better way was to start new once more and concluding that the United States had a right to Oregon, he believed here was the place to meet nature, where, freed from the evils on even the

Atlantic side, a new society might be established on more liberal principles. His industry was very great in collecting all available information, and he appealed to the public by a continuous publication of all the facts he could obtain. He got the ear of Congress, and it is said by Mrs. Victor "from the similarity between some of the views put forth in his writings and the form of the first Oregon bills brought before Congress by Floyd, of Virginia, in 1820, and later, it might be safely inferred that Kelley had been consulted."

But finding that Congress could not be moved to action by the simple rights of the case, he decided in 1824 that he must not only point out those rights and show how they might be established, but himself form a colony who should proceed to Oregon and begin actual settlement under the treaty of joint occupancy. Although by no means a born leader, and thus now off his natural ground, he succeeded in organizing a company of several hundred persons, and in 1828 was ready to move. His idea was to go to St. Louis, and following the track of the fur companies cross to Oregon—precisely the route afterward taken by American emigration. But his plans were opposed by the fur companies, who wished no settlements, and by the bulk of the newspapers, which are often ready to berate a new enterprise, and was discouraged by even the friends of Oregon in the Senate, who feared the movement premature. The effort therefore failed.

He was counseled to wait, and renewing his agitation, spent his winters in Washington, pressing his views upon all, probably with something of the insistence that a slight, ideal person uses in approaching practical men. Under assurances that a colony would be protected if established in Oregon, he founded The American Society for Encouraging Settlement of Oregon. This met with no great encouragement, but rather roused unfriendly criticism. In the autumn of 1832 he decided to make the journey to the land of his dreams, and securing a passport, and with a small party, selected a route by way of Mexico. At New Orleans he was left alone, but continued the journey to Vera Cruz. Here his goods were confiscated by the Mexican authorities for duties, and he was thrown upon his single resources. His offer to teach in the schools or university was rejected, and he went on to California. Here he had no better success with the authorities. Governor Figueroa suspected him of some ulterior purpose and rejected his offer to make a survey and map of the Sacramento Valley. Americans, moreover, were not well liked in that then dependency of Mexico; and Kelley, being cast off by the authorities, got himself into no favor by forming a partnership with some traders then in the country. This meeting and arrangement, however, was of great interest to Oregon, and saved Kelley's journey from stark failure; or rather it made of his personal failure a success that perhaps would not have been accomplished if he had

brought the colonists that he intended from Boston. He secured men for Oregon of the fiber of the Rocky Mountains.

The leading individual of these Americans in California was Ewing Young, who traded from Taos, New Mexico, to California for horses and furs. To him Kelley told his plans, and convinced him that Americans had the right of settlement in Oregon which the British were gradually winning away. Young was a man of ideas, and his mind was soon fired with the thought of occupying a baronial tract in some grassy valley of Oregon, where, as he learned, his bands of horses might wander and multiply at will on the ranges. He decided, therefore, to drive his horses north, rather than south, and carry thither the flag of his country, which meant to him unlimited liberty. As he says—Mrs. Victor quoting his own statement—“ I had seventy-seven horses and mules. Kelley and the other five men had thirty-one.” Besides these seven men and 108 animals, the party was joined by nine others with fifty-six animals. These latter, however, deserted before reaching Oregon. The party that arrived was of the utmost importance. This was not until the autumn of 1834, Kelley being thus long delayed on his adventurous and disappointing journey, and we thus somewhat anticipating other events; for Wyeth and the first missionaries were by this time in Oregon. The names of the party from California, besides Kelley and Young, were Webley J. Hauxhurst, Joseph



Gale, John Howard, Lawrence Carmichael, John McCarty, Brandywine, Kilborne, Elisha Ezekiel and George Winslow, the last being perhaps the first colored man in the territory after York, of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Contrary to expectation, this band of adventurers was received coldly, or actually refused admission in Oregon. By the missionaries—Lee and Frost—they are described indifferently as “about a dozen persons, most of them from the United States. Some of them had been sailors, some hunters in the mountains, . . . and one, Mr. Kelley, was a traveler.” Kelley was sick, having contracted malarial fever in Southern Oregon, and was left alone, Young being required to look after straying horses. It has also been stated that there was trouble with Indians at this point, one of the savages being killed, and this was the beginning of the enmity of the Rogue River tribes. By Michael Laframboise, however, of the Hudson’s Bay Company, returning from San Francisco, Kelley was picked up and brought on his way until overtaken by Young. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness of “Michael.”

By McLoughlin, however, the entire party was interdicted and even refused admission at Fort Vancouver. Kelley, being sick, was accorded a small cabin outside the post, and was attended upon as a person in need, but was not treated as a “gentleman.” McLoughlin says of Kelley (*Document Oregon Historical Quarterly*, June, 1900): “In 1834 one

Kelley came from Boston by way of California, accompanied by Ewing Young and eight English and American sailors. Kelley left the States with a party intending to come here by way of Mexico, but the party broke up on the way, and Kelley alone reached California, and with one man overtook our California trappers on their return about two hundred miles from San Francisco, and Young, a few days after, with the rest of them. But as General Figueroa, Governor of California, had written me that Ewing Young and Kelley had stolen horses from the settlers of that place, I would have no dealings with them and told them my reasons. Young maintained he stole no horses, but admitted the others had. . . . I told him that might be the case, but as the charge was made I could have no dealings with him until he cleared it up. . . . I treated all the party the same as Young, except Kelley, who was very sick. Out of humanity I placed him in a house, attended on him, and had his victuals sent him every meal till he left in 1836, when I gave him a passage to Oahoo." McLoughlin also gave him seven pounds sterling.

The charge of horse stealing, however, was entirely unfounded, and made Young justly indignant. He determined to live in the country and to hold no intercourse with McLoughlin. He accordingly took claim to a large region, embracing nearly all the Chehalem Valley, on the principle of a California ranchario, one of the most beautiful in all Oregon—a country of grass and streams and bare hills, lightly

sprinkled with old oak trees. This became an independent settlement, scorning alike the British fort and the Methodist mission. More of its history will be stated later. McLoughlin's demand that Young should "clear up" a charge sent from a distance of five hundred miles before he could have any dealings was clearly unreasonable. It can scarcely be otherwise than that both McLoughlin and Figueroa wished to break up American enterprise, though McLoughlin had kindly personal feelings. Young cleared up the charge in due time, but loftily refused to accept the offer to trade at Vancouver.

While Kelley himself was treated as an outcast, demanding care, but not accorded hospitality, the charity that sent his meals regularly and provided shelter outside the gate could not excuse the discrimination. He is stated by a clerk at the fort to have been "penniless and ill clad, and was considered rather too rough for close companionship, and was not invited to the mess. . . . It should be borne in mind that discipline was rather severe in those days, and a general commingling would not do."

This humiliating position was assigned to him, and he was left to wear his leather pantaloons with a red stripe down the seam, a blanket capote, and a white slouched hat, during his entire stay at Vancouver, and long after the charge of theft had been cleared away. Mrs. Victor, the especial champion of Dr. McLoughlin, allows the truth of Kelley's version, that his exclusion was due to his colonization views,

and his writings. She says: "It was Kelley as colonizer and defamer of the company who was unwelcome, even after it was evident there was no stain on his character." He remained until he had taken very complete statistics of the country, and had mapped and located points of commercial importance; then returned to the East, where he made use of his information. The treatment accorded Kelley by Wyeth and other Americans at Vancouver was even more humiliating, and much less excusable, than of McLoughlin.

The extremes of judgment upon the character and work of Hall J. Kelley seem to have been placed by Bancroft, who regards him as an idle visionary, and Mrs. Victor, who elevates him to a place among the fathers of Oregon.\*

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\* Our chain of right to Oregon had snapped in our failure to hold our own against the strongly organized English trade. But we might easily forego that form of occupation if we could only forge the link of occupation by home builders. The other links of the chain of our title had been so gloriously welded that to fail at this point would be a national disgrace. So thought many. The idea was soon to warm a host of pioneers. It had already set one mind aflame.

Hall J. Kelley, a Boston school teacher, became in 1815 an enthusiast for saving the Oregon country to the Union through colonization. In 1828 an emigration society was organized with a large membership. This was incorporated in 1831, and the spring of 1832 was fixed as the time for setting out on an overland expedition to Oregon. But something more than enthusiasm was needed to get an expedition even mustered, equipped and started for Oregon, to say nothing of conducting it successfully through two thousand miles of wilderness. . . . Kelley wished to transplant a Massachusetts town to Oregon and make it the nucleus. He hoped to repeat with appropriate variations the history of the Puritan colony of Massachusetts Bay. The New Englander of the nineteenth century,

The services in themselves of Captain Bonneville to the fortunes of Oregon entitle him to little more mention or remembrance than many of the other Rocky Mountain adventurers, though he pushed farther westward and even reached the banks of the Columbia below the Snake and projected a fort on the Willamette. His name and career have, however, been advanced to a higher level partly by his own literary ambition, but more particularly by the pen of Washington Irving. By this later feat, that of reaching the literary feeling of the American people, he gained more than the simple credit due to the adventurer. "The Adventures of Captain Bonneville" will always stand as a fine literary achievement, and it is a book possessing extreme value as fixing in permanent form the romantic ideas with which

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however, was not so ready to sacrifice himself for an idea as had been his progenitors of the seventeenth.—F. G. Young; Introduction to *Correspondence of Nathaniel J. Wyeth*.

It is impossible to show any other American at so early a period not only devoting himself to the intellectual labor of discussing the Oregon Question, and to promoting colonization societies, but who undertook and overcame, without support, the cost and perils of immigration with the sole object of verifying his teachings to the country. So completely was he sustained in his views [by the event] that we feel surprised at this day to notice how closely they agree with what is now known of this region. . . . The sufferings and the disappointments he endured on his journey to and his residence in Oregon, were very great, and few men of his slight physical endowments could have withstood them. It is only justice to agree with him that he set on foot by his writings the immigration movement to the shores of the Pacific in all its forms, whether missionary, commercial or colonizing.—Frances Fuller Victor; *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, December, 1901.

If we compare the unprotected and unpaid services of Kelley with  
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the western half of the continent was held during that plastic period by the people of the eastern. It was in that youthful or fantastic conception that most of the charm lay, and which here and there from all parts of the East caught up occasional youths, who later headed for Oregon, and even affected mature men with the thought, if not of buffaloes and Indians and unlimited adventures, at least with the conception of opportunities for business enterprises no longer open in the Eastern States, and fast closing even in the Ohio Valley and along the Mississippi.

Bonneville was a son of a French immigrant to New York and a graduate from West Point. Being stationed on the frontier he gained a romantic notion

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the protected and paid services of Lewis and Clark, we have to acknowledge that a debt of appreciation and public recognition, at least, is due to the Yankee schoolmaster who spent the best years of his life in teaching the United States government and people the value of the Oregon territory.—Ibid.

I consider that the real contest for Oregon was between the date of the arrival of Hall J. Kelley, Ewing Young and the freemen who came with them, or near their date and 1846.—John Minto; *Proceedings Oregon Historical Society*, December, 1901.

To him, more than any one person, in my judgment, may be attributed, justly attributed, the subsequent occupation of the country by emigrants from the United States—and Oregon should in some way, worthy of the subject and herself, yet acknowledge and commemorate that fact.—M. P. Deady.

The Boston school master (Hall J. Kelley) is a character the historian is not particularly proud of. He is neither a great hero nor a great rascal. He is great at nothing, and is remarkable rather for his lack of strength and staggering for fifty years under an idea too big for his brain. He was a born enthusiast and partisan, one of a class of projectors more capable of forming grand schemes than of carrying them to a successful issue.—Hubert Howe Bancroft.



of the Rocky Mountain country, and having some talent for descriptive writing formed the intention to visit these regions personally. He succeeded in gaining permission of the War Department for a journey to take observations and make reports upon the territory, and the condition of the native populations. He then repaired to New York and there procured the means to equip an expedition and outfit a trapping party, which was the means he chose to cover the expenses of his investigation. It was Alfred Seton, who had been in the Astor party, that furnished the financial backing. On May 1, 1832, Bonneville was ready to leave the bounds of civilization for the Indian country. He had gathered a company of 110 men and a train of twenty wagons drawn by oxen, or by a double span of mules or horses. This was the second recorded party taking a wagon train to the Rocky Mountains, Sublette of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company having gone to the head of Wind River, as mentioned heretofore, several years before.

An itinerary of Bonneville's journey shows that he left Fort Osage on the Missouri May 1; June 11, delayed somewhat by the rains of spring, he reached the forks of the Platte, or Nebraska, as called in the pages of Irving. Irving also states that of the North Fork, which he intended to follow, he "knew nothing" except that it was from the direction he wished to go. This can only be explained on supposition that owing to keen competition of the Rocky Mountain Company he was unable to avail himself of the

information gained by that company; yet even then their trace across the spurs of the hills, or over the fords, must have been easily followed. On June 21, the train was at Scott's Bluff, a point so conspicuous on the old Oregon Road that it is worth while to remember the origin of the term, which was simply for an unfortunate man of that name, who, being too ill to move, was secretly left by his comrades on pretense of getting supplies, but whose skeleton was found the next year by those same men sixty miles from the point where he had been abandoned, the distance which he had crawled before dying. On July 12 the Sweetwater, having deviated from the Platte, on this course being difficult to follow on account of impending highlands, was reached; and on the 20th the Rocky Mountains were first sighted. On the 24th a small tributary of Green River was crossed, showing they had passed to the waters of the Pacific, which was indicated by a catch of trout peculiar to the streams of this side. On the 26th the train was overtaken by Fontanelle of the American Fur Company, deprived of game on account of Bonneville's company preceding them, and much exhausted by hard travel. The next day the Green River was reached, and in the grassy meadows skirting this fine stream the animals were allowed to recuperate and the men to relax while a suitable field of operations was chosen.

Not far ahead of Bonneville had passed Wyeth, who was traveling with Sublette and Campbell, of the

Rocky Mountain Company, and at Pierre's Hole had been in a *melée* with the Blackfeet. Competition in this region was found to be keen, and Vanderburgh and Dripps of the American company were already in the field.

August 22 Bonneville set off for the upper Salmon River country, understanding that this was rich in beaver, and on the third of September met with a party of Nez Perces. Of this tribe, who have figured so constantly in history as the friends of the Americans, he formed a very high estimate. They were poor, but peaceable, and although constantly harried by the Blackfeet, who drove off their horses, would not fight except upon the strongest compulsion; yet when once brought to bay were more than a match for their predatory enemies. They had already learned some of the chief Christian doctrines from Pierre Pambrun, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Fort Walla Walla, such as keeping of the Sabbath, or a holy day, daily prayer and worship and implicit faith in the Supreme Being; they were also honest, kind, peaceable and hospitable. Their chief vice was gambling and their main diversion was horse racing, which they indulged even on the Sabbath.

The following account is worthy of repetition as indicating the manner of this simple people. Bonneville's provisions became exceedingly scanty and his men nearly starved, when a band of equally starved Nez Perces arrived, sharing with the whites their small store of roots and rosebuds. Bonneville started

a party out hunting and asked the Indians to join. "To his surprise they promptly declined. He inquired the reason of their refusal, seeing that they were in nearly as starving a situation as his own people. They replied that it was a sacred day with them, and the Great Spirit would be angry should they devote it to hunting. They offered, however, to accompany the party if it would delay its departure until the following day, but this the pinching demands of hunger would not permit and the detachment proceeded.

"A few days afterward four of them signified to Bonneville that they were about to hunt. 'What,' exclaimed he, 'without guns or arrows and with only one old spear? What do you expect to kill?' They smiled among themselves, but made no answer. Preparatory to the chase they performed some religious rites and offered up to the Great Spirit a few short prayers for safety and success; then receiving the blessing of their wives, they leaped upon their horses and departed, leaving the whole party of Christian spectators amazed and rebuked by this lesson of faith and dependence upon a supreme and benevolent Being. 'Accustomed,' adds Bonneville, 'as I had heretofore been to find the wretched Indian revelling in blood and stained by every vice which can degrade human nature, I could scarcely realize the scene which I had witnessed. Wonder at such unaffected tenderness and piety, where it was least to have been expected, contended in our bosoms with shame and confusion at receiving such pure and wholesome instruc-

tions from creatures so far below us in the arts and comforts of life. The simple prayers of the poor Indians were not unheard. In the course of four or five days they returned, laden with meat. Captain Bonneville was curious to know how they attained such success with such scanty means. They gave him to understand that they had chased the herd of buffalo at full speed, until they tired them down, when they easily dispatched them with a spear, and made use of the same weapon to flay the carcasses. To carry through their lessons to their Christian friends, the poor savages were as charitable as they had been pious, and generously shared with them the spoils of their hunting, giving them food enough to last for several days.

“ A further and more intimate intercourse with this tribe gave Captain Bonneville still greater cause to admire their strong devotional feelings. ‘ Simply to call these people religious,’ says he, ‘ would convey but a faint idea of the deep tone of piety which pervades their whole conduct. Their honesty is immaculate, and their purity of purpose and their observance of the rites of their religion are most uniform and remarkable. They are certainly more like a nation of saints than a horde of savages.’ Finding at length that he could give them further instruction on their favorite subject, they asked the officer to teach them. He often did so, finding that he had quite a fund of Christian doctrine and ethics to impart. ‘ Many a time,’ says he, ‘ was my little lodge



thronged, or rather piled, with hearers; for they lay on the ground, one leaning over the other until there was no further room, all listening with greedy ears to the wonders which the Great Spirit had revealed to the white man. No other subject gave them half the satisfaction, or commanded half the attention, and but few scenes in my life remain so freshly on my memory, or are so pleasurably recalled to my contemplation, as these hours of intercourse with a distant and benighted race in the midst of the desert.' "

Further contact with these and the lower Nez Perces on the Clearwater and the Snake confirmed these good impressions, and so far as Bonneville reports these were a people almost without a fault. They were extravagantly desirous of communication with the Americans, whom they called Big Hearts. Their non-militant spirit often led to carelessness, and repeated losses from the Blackfeet; but they were close friends with the Flat Heads and Pen d'Oreilles on the north, and with the Walla Wallas and Cayuses on the west. With the lower Nez Perces Bonneville had many amusing experiences, particularly in playing the doctor, as Clark had done before him, and with equal success. He found these bands of the tribe hospitable to the extreme, much more comfortably provided and better provisioned than the upper bands; and, as at present among the same people, courtly and rather showy in their manners. They were rich in horses, and it was from them that the upper bands, who were the chief sufferers from the

depredations of the Blackfeet, obtained fresh supplies when their own were stolen.

Bonneville made many journeys to and fro during the two years, upon one occasion being in the Crow country. The speech, or, eulogium, upon his country by a Crow chief, Arapooish, is so good a specimen of Indian thought and language that it deserves insertion here; and thanks are due to Bonneville and Irving for its preservation. It shows the true Indian love of country, mingled with contempt for all others. He said: "The Crow country (Yellowstone and Wind River) is a good country. The Great Spirit has put it in exactly the right place; while you are in it you fare well; whenever you go out of it, whichever way you travel, you fare worse.

"If you go to the south you have to wander over great barren plains; the water is warm and bad, and you meet the fever and ague.

"To the north it is cold; the winters are long and bitter, with no grass; you cannot keep horses there, but must travel with dogs. What is a country without horses?

"On the Columbia they are poor and dirty, paddle about in canoes and eat fish. Their teeth are worn out; they are always taking fish bones out of their mouths. Fish is poor food.

"To the east they dwell in villages; they live well; but they drink the muddy water of the Missouri—that is bad. A Crow's dog would not drink such water.



“ About the forks of the Missouri is a fine country; good water, good grass, plenty of buffalo. In summer it is almost as good as the Crow country; but in winter it is cold; the grass is gone, and there is no salt weed for the horses.

“ The Crow country is in exactly the right place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains; all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh, and the bright streams come tumbling out of the snow banks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer and the antelope, when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep.

“ In the autumn, when your horses are fat and strong from the pastures you can go down into the plain and hunt the buffalo, or trap the beaver on the streams. And when winter comes on you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo for yourselves and cotton wood bark for your horses; or you may winter in the Wind River Valley, where there is salt weed in abundance.

“ The Crow country is in exactly the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow country.”

Bonneville came westward in the summer of 1834, having met Wyeth with his second party on the way and established very cordial personal relations with

the factor at the fort, Pierre Pambrun, until he asked to purchase supplies for his trade. At this, says Irving, Pambrun assumed a withered expression and replied that as acquaintances and gentlemen they would be on a footing of good will, but his company could not supply the necessaries for a competitive trade in their territory. Upon this Bonneville hastily set out to cross the Blue Mountains for the Snake River country, although the season was still early, being March, and there was deep snow on the summit. In the autumn he returned to Walla Walla with the intention of establishing a post on the Willamette, but reaching the country of the Cayuses on the Umatilla was refused provisions by this tribe. Upon questioning them for their reasons he ascertained that they had orders from the Hudson's Bay Company—on pain, probably, of losing their own trade advantages with the British—to furnish no supplies and hold no communion with the Americans. After considering the situation, and not feeling that he had any basis of supplies for competition on the Willamette, all that he had being brought by wagons and pack trains from the Missouri, while his rivals were supplied directly by sea at a tithe of the expense, he soon decided to abandon an attempt that he knew would be fought to a finish by the chief factor at Vancouver. He consequently returned across the mountains, and although not having made a financial success of his enterprise, he had satisfied to some extent his love of adventure and had collected consid-

erable information of value. It was at Astor's hospitable board that Irving first saw Bonneville, and was deeply impressed with his romantic tales of a life that he would himself have liked to follow. With the personality of the soldier trapper he was also charmed, his stories being told in a quiet tone, and with gentle modulations that formed a strong contrast to their wild nature. Meeting him again in Washington he found that the notes taken on the trails of the west were being compiled and ready for an editor; with great courtesy, and thereby giving the unknown author a standing at the top, Irving volunteered to prepare the manuscript for the press, thus adding a fine literary finish, some of which is Irving's best workmanship, to matter that has less historical significance than much else that has been recorded by western explorers and travelers.

Bonneville seems to deserve the credit of taking the first wagon train across the divide to Green River, and of making an attempt to establish an American post on the Willamette. All that he actually proved was that Oregon was held fast by the grasp of the Briton, and that American competition from the Missouri was out of the question. As to his character, he was evidently not a very powerful force, being sanguine and itinerant and something of a tyro in business, yet a tolerably capable commander. By Bancroft, who is inclined to underrate the competitors of the Hudson's Bay Company, he is given an unenviable name; but, assisted to fame by Irving, he

deserves honorable mention among those who led the march to the Pacific.

Nathaniel J. Wyeth, whose period of activity in Oregon was nearly contemporaneous with that of Kelley and Bonneville, with both of whom he was on terms of intimate acquaintance, is remembered in New England with high esteem. By James Russell Lowell, the American poet and diplomatist, he is spoken of as "a townsman of mine"; and the further reminiscence is added: "I well remember his starting sixty years ago [for Oregon], and knew him well in after years. He was a very remarkable person, whose conversation I valued highly. A born leader of men, he was fitly called Captain Nathaniel Wyeth as long as he lived." He is also appreciatively noticed in a recent volume recounting the historic scenes and buildings around Boston. From this it is inferred that he belonged to one of the old families, the author remarking in describing Fresh Pond: "Time out of mind the shores of the pond belonged to the Wyeths, and one of the family deserves our notice in passing, and following is given a short sketch of his adventure to the Columbia River."

Wyeth's expedition may be regarded as the practical turn of the somewhat visionary schemes of Kelley, from whose writings and society for promotion of colonization in Oregon he undoubtedly received his incentive. It is certain that he made a brilliant and sterling effort to bring down the fund of interest

awakened in Boston to a definite movement and to reduce it to a business venture.

In 1831 he was a member of Kelley's society, or colony, and was co-operating with the plan then on hand to send out two expeditions; the first was to be of men only to start in January of the following year, to be followed later and at more leisure by families. But as the date of making the start was deferred from time to time, he lost confidence and patience and determined to abandon entirely the scheme of colonization and reduce his efforts to business only.\* He had formed a comprehensive view of the business situation on the Pacific coast, and had studied the relations of the American and British governments to this situation. He felt convinced that the Hudson's Bay Company was making a great deal of money out of furs, and that the Americans could do so if they would attempt to control the situation in the same way. He said: "A strong inducement to this enterprise has been the peculiar state of trade of the country in question. The American Government, with ideas of reciprocity in their head, made a convention with Great Britain, which, after having been extended, will terminate in 1838, by

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\*Wyeth's statement of his connection with Kelley's project is as follows: "What Mr. Kelley tells you is not the truth. It is true that I once proposed to join his expedition, but I relinquished the idea when they joined their two expeditions into one; for I consider it impracticable and inhuman to attempt a passage across the continent with a party of men, women and children; the undertaking is enough for the men."

which the citizens of either power have the common right of trade in the whole territory claimed by both on that coast. I think this convention will not be renewed, because it virtually destroys our trade there, but opening it to the competition of the British Company—whose capital and facilities are such that [our] vessels cannot trade. If at the expiration of this convention the treaty should not be renewed, as I do not think it will be, some part of that coast will be an unencumbered field to whoever may be there.”

It was his intention to “be there” and occupy a country dropped by the British, and not otherwise occupied by the Americans. The country that he expected thus to become the territory of the Americans was that south of the Columbia to California, and eastward to the Rocky Mountains, including the rich region of the Snake River. He had no thought or expectation of disputing the claim of the British further north; he also conceived that England and the British Fur Company had no intention of disputing the American claim south of that line. He was simply laying plans to adjust what he thought would be a remunerative business to political conditions that he thought were clearly foreshadowed.

He saw clearly also—which implies close study of routes and a generally large conception of geographical relations—what has been stated recently as follows (F. G. Young, University of Oregon); “The Oregon country lay much more accessible to British activity than to ours. . . . A vast expanse of



arid plains lay as a barrier between St. Louis, the base of operations of the American companies, and the game preserves of the Rocky Mountains and Oregon. This region had to be traversed with the more expensive pack horse transit. Before the British Company, with bases on Lake Superior and the Hudson Bay, there lay stretched an uninterrupted game preserve to the headwaters of the Columbia. For traversing this there were wonderfully convenient natural facilities of reticulated water courses, making easy water transits." Wyeth perceived that the country which he wished to exploit for the fur trade was thus outflanked by British territory, and he determined to remedy the difficulty and overcome the disadvantage by renewing Astor's plan of supplying his Columbia and Snake River stations by ships around Cape Horn to the head of navigation of the great river.

This he deemed would be wholly without incumbrance upon his fur business, for, taking note of the efforts of Dominis, or Thompson, or other Yankee captains who had been to the Columbia, he calculated that the ship transporting his goods might take on at the Columbia a load of salmon, as a return cargo, which would pay the entire expense of the voyage. Judging from data that he considered reliable, he computed that by the end of five years—the time that he gave his enterprise to run—he would be at the head of a business worth two hundred thousand dollars a year. For this vast undertaking, contemplat-



ing the movement of men four thousand miles across the country, and ships sixteen thousand miles by sea, and of which he had only a general conception—he felt himself equipped by nature. His disposition is strongly like that of Ledyard—sanguine and ardent, but tinged at all times by a certain melancholy; intensely practical, but haunted also by metaphysical speculations. Yet he says: “Now in the kind of move which I have taken I have been guided, I think, by a sound judgment in regard to my capabilities. Whether experience will justify this judgment remains to be proved; but in the meantime I cannot divest myself of the opinion that I shall compete better with my fellow men in new and untried paths than in those to pursue which requires only patience and attention.” He was then connected with the ice business, at twelve hundred dollars a year, to which he returned after his five years of adventure in Oregon.

That it was a mental, or moral, unrest that was at the bottom of his extraordinary venture is shown also in a letter written on the way, by sea, from Boston to Baltimore. He says: “My health is pretty good, and hope and excitement have made another man of me. I am determined to give up no more to melancholy feelings, but rouse myself up to exertion and enterprise, and forget the things that have been and all but what is before me.” Without this “pale cast of thought,” to avoid which so many American youth have started across the continent, or embarked

on the ocean to contend with the waves and storms, or chase the "wallowing monsters spouting their foam fountains in the sea," Americans would not have had their character or performed their deeds. That Wyeth was disposed to philosophize upon his character and conduct is also shown by his admission that he was impatient—which every letter shows—but asserted that he did not lack perseverance, which is also borne out by his course of life.

Such reflection was altogether necessary in his case, if he was to attain "a fame and wealth that would keep him on a par with the best," as was his ambition, for he had no other capital than his restless mind. Having formed a definite conception of the enterprise, his only recourse was to interest men of sufficient capital to entrust him with the means of prosecuting his plan. It is illustrative of the man that he was able to do this; taking up, apparently within six months or a year, and shaping to a point a business that a capitalist like Astor had found it no light task to float. It was equally illustrative of the plasticity of the times. In New England a man of brains and enterprise never need lack means to work out his plans. The theory that great concentration of capital is necessary for concentration of effort is thus signally confuted. It is when wealth is almost equally distributed among the many that both the men and the means for extension of business are most easily obtained. To his two brothers, Leonard and Charles, in business in Baltimore, and other business

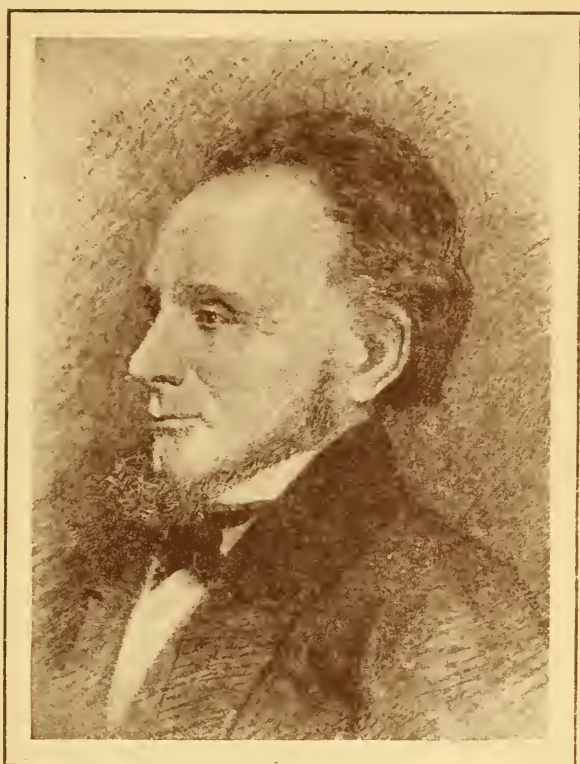
friends, including an uncle, he applied for money, and strained his own small means to the utmost, mortgaging his house for the small sum of \$500. He interested his brother Jacob to accompany the excursion as surgeon. The company was organized upon the plan of the whalers: each one connected with it was to have a certain shares of the profits; Wyeth, as furnishing the capital, eight parts; the surgeon, two, and the remaining forty parts to be distributed among fifty men—although the company numbered but twenty-eight when it started. Great care was taken to make all provisions for the business in hand. Inquiries in regard to salmon, which were to be taken and salted; provision for starting a farm and raising vegetables, and also to try tobacco, which should be grown as an article of commerce among the Indians and trappers; traps and horse caparisons; inquiries of the Secretary of State, Edward Everett, and of the Secretary of War, as to treaty relations, laws of trade and rights of Americans, and many other inquiries show that the mind of the leader was teeming with ideas that could not be covered in the efforts of any man single handed, or with a force the size of his.

An interest in Boston somewhat similar to that shown in the enterprise of Captain Gray forty years before was manifested when Wyeth was ready to go. Curious vehicles, called amphibions, intended for both land and water travel, were constructed and shipped on the “*Ida*,” a packet from Boston to Bal-

timore, but were afterward discarded as of no advantage. Although it was still March, the company of young men bivouacked on an island in Boston Bay a few days before starting, in order to inure themselves to camp life. An admirable detail of this and the second journey is given by Wyeth himself, which will be inserted.

Reaching the frontier on the Missouri, the party found they must follow the modes of the trappers, and joining William Sublette, who was close upon the wagons of Bonneville, as mentioned before, they proceeded with pack animals and horses toward the mountains. Sublette, having no fear of competition from this raw force, was only glad to have the addition of a score or so young men for his own rather slender equipment. Wyeth was to a degree charmed with the hearty friendship of the mountain men—though later, speaking of that class, he calls “the large majority of them” “scoundrels.” Later, with McLoughlin, he formed the strongest attachment; but found himself wholly in his control. He did not even dare to write a business letter from Fort Vancouver, as by conveyance of the Hudson’s Bay Express it would be opened and the contents examined.

In a much worn and broken condition the party emerged from the Blue Mountains and were received with great kindness by Pambrun at Fort Walla Walla. Wyeth was so far reduced as to accept a suit of clothes from the factor, and also to take passage



NATHANIEL J. WYETH





for Vancouver in a Hudson's Bay barge. He was received, however, at this central Fort as a guest rather than as a rival. It was on the 29th of October and the weather was stormy. "Here," he says, "we were received with the utmost kindness by Dr. McLoughlin, the acting governor of the place; Mr. McDonald, Mr. Allen and Mr. McKay, gentlemen resident here." He found "Dr. McLoughlin a fine old gentleman, truly philanthropic in his ideas." He was astonished at the Hudson's Bay Company farm, where were raised 6,000 bushels of wheat, besides barley, peas and potatoes; and young orchards of apple and peach trees. This, as the garden at Walla Walla, doubtless seemed to him like a dream; and he felt honored by the attentions of men so well educated and courteous as he found here.

So far as business was concerned, however, he found no prospect whatever. Soon after reaching Vancouver the few of his men left (he mentions Ball, Woodman, Sinclair, Breck, Abbot and Tibbitts; and Smith was also of the number) asked to be released from their contract, and he could not refuse. One, Trumbull, died soon after reaching Vancouver. To add to his discomfort, the vessel on which he had succeeded in shipping his goods did not arrive. This was the "Sultana," which was lost in the Tropics of the Pacific.

Passing the winter as a guest of Dr. McLoughlin, whose kindness and courtesy never failed, and making various excursions and observations down the



Columbia and up the Willamette, he departed with but two men, as soon as the season opened, for the East. July 4th, of 1833, we find him near the Wind River Mountains, in an altitude so high that winter has not yet departed, writing letters. To his brother Charles he says, "I hope that you to-day are better off than myself. I hope you are in peace of mind and content, enjoying with your friends and family the festivities of the day; and I hope you have a thought, too, of me. Imagine to yourself a fellow seated on the open and extensive prairie beside a little brook, without a fire in freezing weather, and poorly clad in skins, with plenty of poor raw dried buffalo meat, and you see Nat."

Although thus baffled he had been revolving a way to recover, or rather prosecute still his designs; he had made an offer to trap for the Hudson's Bay Company—an offer which seems never to have been noticed; he was too weak as a trapper even to compound with; another was to Bonneville to trap in California and go to San Francisco. But the final conclusion was to return home, and make up a new expedition. He proceeded to the Big Horn, an affluent of the Yellowstone, and making a boat of buffalo hides drawn over a frame, set out down the shallow stream; reaching St. Louis at last by the Yellowstone and the Missouri, and thence, by making some forced orders on his old creditors, as he had done at Vancouver simply to save his self respect, soon completed his return to Boston. But though coming back from

the land of his ardent hopes without a dollar of his own, or a man left, and to hear that his goods in the ship were lost, so buoyant was he that his plan for the second attempt was already made up.

In reading over his plans we find them perfectly reasonable and altogether flattering. In addition to prosecuting the fur and fishery business on the Columbia, he would buy horses of the Upper Columbia Indians, supply the Rocky Mountain trade from his ship via Cape Horn, and even invade the business of New Mexico and oust the farmer freighters from St. Louis in the Santa Fé market. We cannot help but see that by the second year at least not a wagon would move from the Missouri River to the Spanish country.

In Boston, he met with the same confidence as before. As he said, he demanded confidence of men, because he always treated men with confidence; nor did he ever approach any except those who were fully competent to understand his designs.

With the details of his second expedition we hardly need to linger. With a much larger force he set out in the spring of 1834 for the Rocky Mountains and the Columbia. He had a contract to supply Sublette and Fitzpatrick with their goods for the season. He had secured on favorable terms a brig, the "May Dacre," Captain Lambert, for the Columbia; he had gained the experience to have the correct sort of goods for Indian trade; he had with him two Cambridge scientists, Nuttall and Townsend; he had also

a small party of Methodist missionaries as traveling companions. He believed that he now understood the salmon business, and that his plans would all come to a head at the right time and place. But never did an expedition, unless that of Astor, meet with a more continuous series of disappointments. Sublette and Fitzpatrick refused to accept the goods; paying the forfeit, but without interest. This required Wyeth to stop on the way and build a fort, where he left some of his men to trade out the goods. The fur trade seemed demoralized, and the trappers from the mountains were tardy to come in, and few furs were to be had. Fort Hall, however, in the center of the great Snake River Valley, remained as the relic of his enterprise. But this speedily fell to the British, who built Fort Boise in the neighborhood and undersold Wyeth, and then bought Fort Hall. Reaching the Columbia in the autumn he found his vessel only just arrived and too late for the fishing season; she had been struck by lightning and was obliged to put in to Valparaiso for repairs.

Nevertheless plans for starting a permanent business were pressed forward. A cargo of timbers was sent to the Sandwich Islands and the brig returned in time for the salmon season of 1835. Fort William was built on Wapato Island about eight miles below Fort Vancouver. But the salmon season proved a failure. Many accidents occurred to the men. Wyeth wrote, September 6, "since writing you last, we have

lost by drowning, scalping, etc., fourteen persons; none by natural death, although the country is sickly. Loss of property by hostility of Indians has been considerable." On the 20th he wrote, "I am now a little better from a severe attack of billious fever. I did not expect to recover, and am still a wreck. Our sick list has been usually one-third of the whole number, and the rest much frightened. Thirteen deaths have occurred besides some killed in the interior by Indians." . . . "Our salmon fishing has not succeeded; half a cargo only obtained. Our people are sick and dying off like rotten sheep of billious disorders."

Sickness, competition and desertion were three constant attendants that he had not reckoned upon to such a serious extent. He had scarcely settled himself on the Columbia, in the autumn of 1834, and sent a party of thirteen Sandwich Islanders and eight whites under Captain Thing for Fort Hall, but he was informed that the islanders had deserted. This obliged him to spare his own islanders to Thing, and himself take a long chase toward California, and afterward down the Columbia to recover the help that he had greatly counted upon to man his posts. Finding the party, "two were killed, one was drowned, and one froze to death in the mountains, and two unaccounted for." As to competition, the Hudson's Bay people at once opened a stock across the river, and the keen Indian bargainers passed back and forth comparing goods and prices. To the Indian mind

there is an element of immorality about changing a price, or asking more or giving poorer quality than the established custom. The Indians, too, were a mere remnant, having utterly perished from Sauvies Island, of which Wyeth wrote, "A mortality has carried off to a man its inhabitants, and there is nothing to attest they ever existed except their decaying houses, their graves, and their unburied bones, of which there are heaps. So you see, as the righteous people of New England say, Providence has made room for me, and without doing them more injury than if I had made room for myself—by killing them off." This island might well be considered haunted ground by the Indians, associated with such sufferings to their people, and with the idea that the Americans, under Dominis, had poisoned the rivers.

When, all the next season, a malady of the same nature attacked Wyeth's people, something of the same superstitious feeling seems to have been entertained by his men. In a region of such loveliness the specter of fever and death haunted all the shadows, and cast uncertainty over all prospects. On September 22 he wrote to Mrs. Wyeth, "The season has been very sickly. We have lost by drowning and disease and warfare seventeen persons to this date, and fourteen are now sick." Here was about the finishing touch to his enterprise, for he adds immediately, "Keep up good spirits, my dear wife, for I expect when I come home, to stop there; and although I shall be poor, yet

we can always live. I hope to find my trees growing and all things comfortable. I think this will be the last until I see you.”

Wyeth's two great enterprises were a most gallant attempt, and brought out upon the historical scene a striking and energetic character. A comprehensive estimate of the reason of its ill success has been given; (F. G. Young) that “The British company with its established posts was supreme. . . . It represented a higher form of economic organization.” He himself said, “The measures of this company (Hudson's Bay) have been conceived with wisdom, steadily pursued, and have been well seconded by their government, and the success has been complete.” He discovered, too, that while England laid no overt claim farther south than the Columbia, their policy was fast bringing in all even to the California line. He added, “Without being able to charge on them any very gross violations of the treaties, a few years will make the country west of the mountains (he seems to include all without exception) as English as they desire. Already the Americans are unknown as a nation, and as individuals their power is despised by the natives of the land. A population is already growing out of the occupancy of the country whose prejudices are not with us, and they will decide before many years to whom the country will belong.” In this latter remark he must have had reference to the settlement on French Prairie, fostered by McLoughlin. He had therefore re-



versed his opinion that the treaty of joint occupation would be abrogated in 1838, leaving all the territory south of the Columbia to the United States. He rather concluded that, "Unless the American government make their power felt and seen to a greater extent than has been the case," the whole of the possession on the Pacific Coast then in dispute would fall to the British.

However, as it was proved in the attempt of Kelley, the chief results to Oregon were in the men who were induced to come, some of whom, though but few, proved at the critical time to be a host for the Americans. These in particular were Solomon Howard Smith, John Ball and Calvin Tibbitts. The other incidental benefit, that of acting as convoy to the first missionary band, will be spoken of later.

Wyeth, although thus unfortunate, manfully shouldered his losses, feeling that though he had been defeated he had not been disgraced; he had tried what other men would not even look at, and was now ready to go back to the pond of his ancestors and sell ice; which he did with great profit. Writing to his friend Brown he chose the following as the epitaph to his defunct but still historically great enterprise; observing: "Doubtless you have observed in your quondam associate some small imperfections, and although he may now have no temptations the grain is still in him. A quotation from an author you used sometimes to read will do for his creed:

“‘My son, these maxims make a rule,  
And lump the eye the gither;  
The rigid righteous is a fool,  
The rigid wise anither.  
The cleanest corn that e’er was dight  
May ha’e some pyles of chaff in;  
So ne’er a fellow creature slight  
For random fits o’ daffin’.”

After his “random fit o’ daffin’” the Boston Yankee retired to his niche in the history of a great world movement, the actors in which seldom knew what national purposes they were fulfilling in the long marches and vigils.

Wyeth’s summary of his two adventures:

On the 10th of March, 1832, I left Boston on a vessel with twenty men for Baltimore, where I was joined by four more; and on the 27th for Frederick, Md. From thence to Brownsville we marched by foot and took passage from that place to Liberty, Mo., on various steamboats, which place we left for the prairies on the 12th of May with twenty-one men, three having deserted; and on the 27th of May three more deserted. On the 8th of July we reached Pierre’s Hole at the head of Lewis River, where there was a rendezvous of trappers and Indians. We remained at this place until the 17th, at which time my party had been reduced by desertion and dismissal to eleven men, and then started for the Columbia, arriving at Cape Disappointment on the 8th of November, 1832, one man having died on the route. There I learned that a vessel on which I had relied for supplies had been wrecked on the Society Islands. This discouraged the party so much that all but two requested a discharge. Of the eight who left me five returned to the United States by sea, one died there in 1834, and two remained as settlers.

In the spring of 1833 I commenced my return to the States with the two remaining men. When I reached the mouth of the Yellowstone one left me to remain with some of the trappers until I should return. With the other I reached the States and soon fitted out a vessel for the Columbia, and on the 7th of February, 1834, left Boston for St. Louis, where I organized a party of seventy men for the over-

land trip, arriving at the headwaters of the Snake or Lewis River in July, 1834, and on the fifteenth of that month commenced to build Fort Hall, and after placing it in a defensive condition left it on the 17th of August following for the mouth of the Columbia. On the 15th of September I reached Oak Point, seventy-five miles from the mouth, where I met my vessel, just arrived after a voyage of eight and a half months, having been struck by lightning at sea and so injured as to be obliged to go into Valparaiso for repairs. This vessel was fitted out for the salmon fishing of that season. Her late arrival caused me to detain her for that year until the following year. During the winter this vessel went to the Sandwich Islands with timber and returned in the spring with cattle, sheep, goats and hogs, which were placed on Wapattoo Island, where in the meantime I had built an establishment called Fort William on the south-westerly side of the island, and about eight miles from the Hudson's Bay Company's post of Vancouver. At this post we grazed all the animals obtained from the islands, California and the Indians; planted wheat, corn and potatoes, peas, beans and turnips; grafted and planted apples and other fruits; built dwelling house and shops for working iron and wood; and in fact made a permanent location which has never been abandoned. I made this my personal residence during the winter and summer of 1835. In the autumn of that year I proceeded to Fort Hall with supplies, having sent some previous to that time. During the winter of 1836 I resided at my post of Fort Hall, and in the spring of that year returned to Fort William, of Wapattoo Island, where I carried more supplies to Fort Hall, arriving there about the 18th of June, and on the 25th left for the United States by way of Taos and the Arkansas River and arrived home early in the autumn of 1836.

The commercial distress of that time precluded the further prosecution of our enterprise that so far had yielded little but misfortunes. It remained only to close the active business, which was done by paying every debt, and returning every man who desired to the place whence he was taken and disposing of the property to the best advantage. All the property in the interior, including Fort Hall, was sold. . . . Fort William, on Wapattoo Island, was retained, and the gentleman then in charge, Mr. C. M. Walker, was directed to lease it to some trusty person for fifteen years. That the original enterprise contemplated permanent occupation is clearly shown by the instructions to Captain Lambert. When I arrived in the autumn of 1832 there were no Americans there, nor an American feeling. Of the eleven men which I had then with me three remained until I

arrived in the autumn of 1834, and nineteen of those who then accompanied me (including the missionaries) remained permanently in the country.

The following appreciative estimate of Wyeth's services has been made by Rev. J. R. Wilson:

The ten years between the renewal, in 1827, of the treaty convention of 1818, and the resumption of the subject in Congress in the year 1837, present a new phase of the Oregon Question and may be termed the period of early American settlement. . . . No actual settlement was made, it is true, at the very first of this period, but about this time the question of colonizing the region of the Columbia River began to be seriously agitated in various parts of the United States. A company having this end in view was organized about this time in Boston, and another in New Orleans, while in various parts of the country the propriety of forming such organizations was seriously discussed. . . .

The first enterprise that followed from this agitation was that of Nathaniel J. Wyeth, of Boston, for the establishment of trade and agriculture on the lower Columbia. After the failure of a first attempt in 1832, Wyeth succeeded in the year 1834 in planting a small settlement on Wapato Island, at the junction of the Willamette with the Columbia. Untoward circumstances and disaffection among his followers defeated his first attempt and sent him back to the east, after two years of gallant struggle, feeling that his second was far from successful. His settlement, while it has had in some sense an unbroken continuity, and has contributed of its members to the subsequent settlements of Oregon, can hardly be said to have had the character of a permanent colony. The largest results of Wyeth's enterprise are rather to be looked for in the contributions he made in various ways to the furtherance of other enterprises than his own.

Substantially the same may be said of Hall J. Kelley, the leading promoter of one or more of the emigration societies already mentioned. He contributed materially to the ultimate settlement of the territory by his persistent and widespread agitation in the east, and later in some measure by bringing into the Willamette Valley a small band of men, some of whose members became permanent settlers.



CHAPTER III

AGITATION IN CONGRESS





**I**N order to understand the feeling at our national capital, and the progress of negotiations between the American and British governments, and what our own government was doing to maintain the rights of its citizens, we should now take a brief résumé. It is a point of extreme interest to notice whether our government, as well as our people, acted efficiently. It has ever been the special object of the historian to see how our government has guarded the liberties of the people and protected them from the exactions and oppressions of a despotism. It is also to be seen whether in thus providing against the overburdening of the people by the government itself, we, as a people, have given the government power enough to safeguard and secure our public and national rights, so as to maintain our standing among the nations and to prevent foreign rulers or despotisms encroaching upon our liberties or absorbing our territories; or overreaching us in the contest for territory to meet the needs of an increasing population. It is evident that to the nation affording the greatest individual liberty, coupled with the greatest security to life, person and property, and an industrial opportunity, will go the greatest degree of growth and expansion, provided that its government also meets efficiently requirements laid upon it by its position in the family of nations. In the Oregon Question much interesting illustration is thrown upon such a query; not only showing how such questions have been met, but in

what way our form of government, which does not rely upon hereditary interests, or titled or propertied rights to uphold public interests, has been able to draw out and avail itself of political support to meet future or geographically distant national needs. This is an aspect of Oregon history that can be little more than hinted at in this work, but no history of this State would be complete that did not sketch at least the process of national thought induced at the capital by the process of accretion of this territory to the American Union.

As will be remembered Astoria was restored to the United States October 6, 1818. This was in conformity with the Treaty of Ghent, closing the War of 1812. While this restitution—which was rather in order to satisfy punctiliously the provisions of the treaty than to extend American authority in the Pacific—was taking place, there was also proceeding a negotiation at London settling points of variance still open after the treaty of peace was signed. It was carried on by Rush and Gallatin, on the part of America, and Goulburn and Robinson for the British. The boundary was fixed then on the northwest so as to run to the Lake of the Woods, and thence west to the Rocky Mountains. After this was agreed upon the respective claims west of the Rockies were considered. The Americans did not assume a perfect title to all the coast, but that this was good as against Great Britain, leaving it to be inferred that another power, perhaps Spain, had a greater interest. The

English affirmed on the other hand a prior claim owing to Cook's discoveries, and occupation, prior to the American activity. "They did not make any formal proposition for a boundary, but intimated that the river itself (the Columbia) was the most convenient that could be adopted, and they could not agree to any which did not give them the harbor at the mouth of that river, in common with the United States."

This, as remarked by Greenhow, was at least unequivocal, but the Americans could not admit it, nor were prepared to dispute it by force, and rather than risk allowing an unsettled condition, it was agreed that all territories and their waters claimed by either power, west of the Rocky Mountains, should be free and open to the vessels, citizens and subjects of both for ten years. This was the treaty of Joint Occupation. It was signed October 20, 1818.

This year was also memorable for the treaty with Spain for the acquisition of Florida. Negotiation was conducted at Washington between John Quincy Adams, for the Americans, and Don Luis de Onis, for Spain. It was finally completed and signed February 22, 1819, and fixed the southern boundary of Oregon, providing that a line from the source of the Arkansas to the 42nd parallel, drawn thence west on that parallel to the Pacific Ocean, should be the northern boundary of the Spanish and the southern boundary of the American territory. At the same time Spain relinquished to the United States all claims on the

Pacific Coast north of this line. About the same time the Russians, who had at one time claimed all the coast down to and below the mouth of the Columbia, and after attempting an establishment at the mouth of the Columbia, had actually made a settlement in California, withdrew formally as far north as latitude 54 degrees 40 minutes. Thus the boundaries of Oregon stood out clearly. The sovereignty was in dispute after this between the United States and Great Britain alone.

In this situation leading Americans from time to time took an interest in examining the relative rights of their own country and Great Britain; and not infrequently with the conclusion that the United States had a right which should be protected. The hand of the great Southerner, John C. Calhoun, is visible here with a document urging action on the part of the general government. In a report to the House of Representatives, dated December 5, 1818, he reviewed the state of trade with the Indians, and recommended as the only means of defending them from the cupidity of traders and from the influence of British trading companies, that the whole territory beyond the organized States and Territories be turned over to a company, for purposes of trade, for twenty years, under necessary regulations by the government. Whether this was Calhoun's own idea, or was presented through him from some one wishing to organize such a company, does not now appear. The expedition to explore the Rocky Mountain territory

after the treaty with Spain in 1819, was also organized by Calhoun. But no steps were taken by Congress to put into execution his recommendations.

In 1820, urged possibly by the recommendations of Calhoun, and influenced, as has been thought, also by Hall J. Kelley, as has been seen, Representative Floyd, of Virginia, made a motion "That an inquiry should be made as to the situation of the settlements on the Pacific Ocean, and as to the expediency of occupying the Columbia River." This was referred to a committee, which brought in a most radical report, showing that the motion was premeditated, and that persons having an interest were at hand to supply information. It was concluded in the report that the United States had a right to the coast up to latitude 53°, if not to 60°, by virtue of rights acquired from Spain, as well as discoveries and settlements of her own citizens; that the trade of the region might be made highly productive, and that the whole coast might be secured by establishing "small trading guards" on the most northeast point on the Missouri and at the mouth of the Columbia, and by favoring immigration to that region by Americans, and also from China. With this report a bill was also brought in for "the occupation of the Columbia River, and regulation of trade with the Indians in the Territories of the United States." The suggestion of immigration from China indicates some plans for cultivation of the soil by Asiatic labor, such as Wyeth afterward hoped to establish with Islanders, partic-



ularly raising tobacco to supply the Indian trade, and points to Hall J. Kelley's plans.

It was apparent, however, that the Floyd bill was in conflict with the treaty of joint occupation, just signed to hold for ten years, and was of no value other than to call attention in a public way to the rights of Americans on the Pacific Coast. This was the most effective way under our form of government to give publicity and to start a public sentiment for holding Oregon. It may be remarked, too, that in view of the actual course which affairs took, that it was very fortunate for Oregon that Calhoun's plan for establishing a monopolistic trading company under government protection, and Floyd's plan, looking to some form of servile or peon labor, were alike allowed to suffer lapse. Southern, or Mexican, or Asiatic conditions, with some form of slave, or semi-slave labor, would have thus been impressed upon Oregon soil. By the very indifference of Congress a premature development of the Pacific Coast was delayed, and it was allowed to be settled on Northern rather than Southern ideas, and was thus reserved to free labor. British pressure held Oregon back except to an elected, or selected, few, who brought no notions except of free American life—the clean seed with the tares blown back. The occupation proposed in this bill was stated by one of the advocates “as an occupation by force only, with some encouragement to settlers.” Here is the tone of imperialism, with which all plans for territorial expansion are tinged

in the first instance. The fate of this bill is thus told by Dr. Wilson. "There were men in Congress who saw the unlawful character of such measure, as it was proposed, and opposed it on that ground. Others joined these actively on the ground that the Oregon Territory, if settled, could never become a part of the Union. To these were added enough who based their opposition on other grounds to defeat every such measure, either in the Senate or the House."

That Oregon was considered, about the beginning of this discussion, as of extremely little account, is shown by Adams taking pains to write in the following minimizing manner to the plenipotentiaries in 1818, closing his instructions on this point: "It may be proper to remark the minuteness of the present interests [in Oregon] either to Great Britain or the United States, involved in this concern; and the unwillingness, for this reason, of this government to include it among the objects of serious discussion with them."

The agitation in Congress, however, continued from session to session, and in 1823 a select committee of the House asked the Quartermaster-General, Thomas S. Jesup, to inquire into the expediency of occupying the mouth of the Columbia. He sent a letter in reply the following February in which he took radical ground, giving it as his opinion that the possession and military command of the Columbia and the upper Missouri was necessary to the protection of the whole Western frontier, as well as of the

fur trade. He proposed the immediate dispatch of two hundred men across the continent and two merchant vessels to proceed by water with cannon and munitions for a post at the mouth of the Columbia, and four or five intermediate posts should be formed between Council Bluffs, on the Missouri, and the Columbia. Thus, he said, "present protection would be afforded to our traders, and, on the expiration of the privileges granted to British subjects to trade on the Columbia, we should be able to remove them from the Territory, and to secure the whole trade to our own citizens." This was an extremely strong form of agitation, and together with the proposition of the Monroe Doctrine, and its construction to apply to British colonies in America, made quite a sensation in England. Canning took notice of it, saying that England was thereby put on her guard.

Negotiations were resumed in 1824 in England, Adams now writing in serious style that the Oregon Territory was a country daily assuming an aspect politically, commercially and territorially of more and more interest to the United States. But the negotiations reached only an abrupt termination as Rush on the part of the United States claimed sovereignty of the whole country from latitude 42° at least as far north as the 51st, Huskisson and Canning refused to consider any such broad claims, assuring him that their government would never assent to the claims set forth respecting the territory watered by the Columbia and its tributaries, as they interfered directly

with the actual rights of Great Britain, from use, occupation and settlement. They considered, too, that, "the unoccupied parts of America were just as much open as heretofore to colonization by Great Britain, . . . and that the United States have no right to take umbrage at establishment of new colonies from Europe in any such parts of America." They proposed definitely in lieu of the American claim, the line of the 49th parallel to the Columbia, and down that river—the main branch of which already had the name of Macgilvray's River on their maps—to the ocean; Great Britain to have the portion north and west of the center of the river, and the United States east and south. They declared that this was a proposal from which their government would never depart.

The bearing of this proposition is not fully understood unless it is considered that at that time the ship channel at the mouth of the Columbia was on the north side. With an apparent disposition to yield half to the United States this really gave the entire control of the Columbia to the British. Besides this it gave the whole of the Straits of Fuca, and the magnificent harbors of Puget's Sound, and all of Gray's Harbor to the same power. The only practicable portages, too, at the Cascades, were on the north side. By this arrangement every important harbor on the coast, and the entrance to the Columbia Valley, and route of inland communication with the interior, would be in the hands of the British. What was left

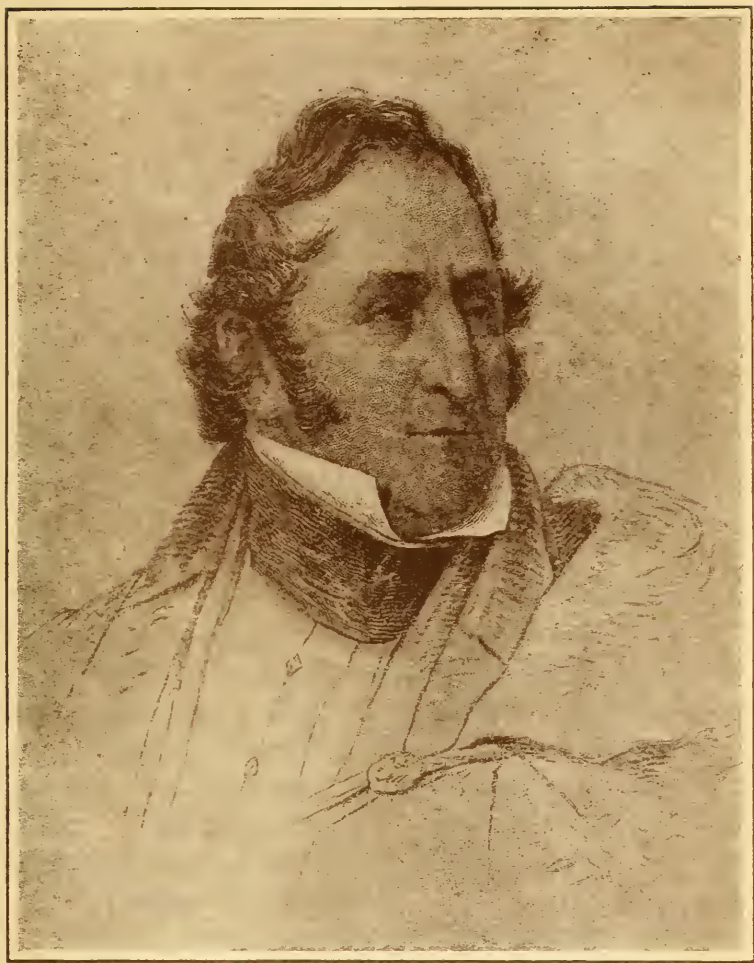
to America after such a division would have been worthless for purposes of trade or commerce, and indefensible from a military point of view. Having thus much, and with a colony growing from occupation in the Willamette Valley, as remarked by Wyeth, with British sympathies, the whole country west of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, from California to the Russian possessions, would be as English as they themselves could wish. Pending the expiration of the treaty of 1818, negotiations were renewed in 1826, Gallatin acting for the United States. He was backed by Clay, who wrote, "The President is anxious for a settlement on just principles. Such a settlement alone would be satisfactory to the people of the United States, or command the concurrence of the Senate. . . . Much better that matters of difference should remain unadjusted than be settled on terms disadvantageous to the United States; and which therefore would be unsatisfactory to the people and to the other departments of government." The Secretary of State wrote also that no line south of the 49th parallel would be accepted by his government. This made the contest in form limited to the territory between the middle of the Columbia River and the line of 49°, or only about three-fourths of what is now the State of Washington; but in reality it was for the supremacy on the coast, as control of this carried control of all. Western Washington was simply the field of battle. This was the masterful situation, both for commercial and

military occupation. With it the British had the upper hand, as without it the Americans would have been so handicapped that no enterprise would have dared venture to the Pacific Coast.

Gallatin very wisely employed the instruction proposed by Clay, and rather than accept a settlement disadvantageous to his country, agreed to a continuation of joint occupation for ten years longer, subject to discontinuance thereafter on a year's notice by either power. Joint occupancy, while holding the situation nominally in abeyance, and better than yielding all by yielding to the Columbia, was still much more favorable to Great Britain than to America. McLoughlin was quietly prosecuting his business and easily beating every American competitor, and nourishing his settlement on French Prairie, and extending his trade to San Francisco, and making such friendly arrangements with the Mexican governor in California that, between the two, both the trade and the reputations of any Americans could be ruined. The grand old man of Oregon was a believer in Republican government, but could hardly have thought otherwise at this time than that Oregon, south of the Columbia, was most likely to develop naturally as an independent state, with its autonomy guaranteed by Great Britain; which would have been the inevitable result if the British demand of the line of the Columbia had been accepted. He fought just as hard to maintain his trade south of the Columbia as north of it; and brought both Wyeth and Kelley



to their knees before him, though Wyeth attempted nothing north of the Columbia, and was confining himself to the territory which Great Britain was willing to formally allow should belong to the United States. He attempted the destruction of Ewing Young by denying him, on an uninvestigated charge of the Governor of California, admission at his fort, and refused him the privileges of trade, though Young contemplated no settlement north of the line claimed by Great Britain; and, while chief factor of a British monopoly, and with his subordinates acting as an officer of the British dependency of Upper Canada, he exercised a control over the persons and property of the settlers on French Prairie that was little less than autocratic—though eminently humane and wise; yet still in a territory that the British were nominally willing to assign to the United States. The jurisdiction of Upper Canada, and an efficient government under that jurisdiction, extended over all Oregon down to California. While, on the other hand, under joint occupation the United States had neither trade, commerce, settlement, jurisdiction, or even protection for any casual travelers like Kelley and Young, or business exploiters like Wyeth. The persons and property of Americans were entirely in the hands of recognized Canadian officers, and to them they must look for protection. There was not one American officer of the peace, not one consul, nor an American medium of exchange in all Oregon; the money was a private currency of a British con-



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cern, which could be withheld at the option of the company.

The state of discussion for this period in Congress is thus ably summarized by Young in his Introduction to Wyeth's Correspondence: "For the time, however, the agreements between the English and the American governments to a joint occupation resulted in an exclusive occupation by the English company. And immediately Floyd in the House (1820), and Benton in the Senate were sounding the alarm that we were in danger of losing Oregon. They urged further that with the English fortified there, holding influence over the Indians, our northwestern frontier would be exposed to depredations like those suffered during the English occupation of the 'Old Northwest.' Those leaders proposed measures to protect and support American interests on the Columbia. The matter was kept before Congress almost continually during this decade. President Monroe, in his annual message in 1824, also urged the establishment of a military post at the mouth of the Columbia, with the view of protecting and promoting our interests there. Expansion to the Pacific, however, was an idea that did not recommend itself to a majority of the two houses of Congress.

"The expense of the proposed undertaking, and the possibility that the step would be viewed by England as a violation of the terms of the existing treaty and thus lead to war, were deterring considerations with the law makers. An Oregon community as a State of

the Union was generally held as a chimera in that day before ocean steamships and railway locomotion. Those constitutionally conservative, without the gift of prophetic vision, or the index of manifest destiny, could not but regard it in that light. Under such conditions to lend further inducement to the westward movement of a people already possessed of a perverse bent in that direction seemed to invite a separation into Atlantic and Pacific nations.”

CHAPTER IV

THE MACEDONIAN CRY





**W**HILE we have thus traversed the ground of the enterprises of Kelley, Wyeth and Bonneville to their disastrous termination, and have also seen the friends of American posses-

sion of Oregon balked in Congress, and even the American diplomatists able to hold on for their country only an arrangement that had placed British sovereignty and Canadian jurisdiction over every foot of all Oregon, and British commerce over all the Pacific from San Diego to Bering's Straits, and to the Sandwich Islands; and to the United States nothing but disaster; there was heard a request that thrilled all the American people. Whatever the opinion of the intelligent individual as to the objective reality of religious opinion, it cannot be ignored by the historian that there is no other such universal sentiment as religious faith. From the time that Mahomet preached the return to Mecca, or Peter the Hermit preached the recovery of the Cross, or Luther preached for an unchained book, or Robinson preached for a new world, every great popular movement has been accompanied by a religious awakening, and has taken to a greater or less degree a religious expression. Hall J. Kelley, a religious and humanitarian reformer, had attempted to awaken the churches to the needs of the Oregon Indians, who were suffered to continue in heathenism although under control of a company, one of whose special duties was to afford them religious instruction.

But he expressed himself in a manner not easily understood by the religious people of America. His colony schemes and bills for appropriations of land, and numerous secular arrangements; and his incessant political agitations struck the churches as the main objects held in his view, and that his call upon the churches was rather a second thought. The religion of that period was intensely unworldly and sought a most conventional, or traditional, expression. Reformation, with demands for which the country was being belabored, was not recognized as of a religious nature. To this state of religious feeling, averse to reform, but seeking traditional expression, a voice from Oregon came as if from the pages of revelation. It was the Nez Perces, who have from the first been capable of picturesque episodes that touch the popular fancy, or go to the people's heart, that thus reached out to the Great White Brother, and roused to action the already sensitive religious consciousness.

The facts seem to be unusually well authenticated, and show both the religious earnestness and the strong executive force of the Nez Perce people. There has been some confusion in popular prints as to what Indians it was who sent the deputation; many accounts, and those the earliest, naming them as Flat-heads, which would be the Kalispels. But this arose from a misapprehension. They are described as Indians with flattened, or pressed, heads, and were at once distinguished as Flat Heads. But this would be

evidence enough that they were not Kalispels, or Flatheads, who do not press, or flatten, the head. The custom of flattening the head obtained chiefly at and near the mouth of the Columbia, all of the free Chinooks and Clatsops flattening the forehead, and the higher the rank the more pronounced the flattening. Slaves only were not thus distinguished. Farther up the Columbia the custom was less observed, the chiefs or leading men only, and seldom the women, being allowed this aristocratic configuration of the skull. Among the Kalispels the custom disappeared entirely, and they were known as Flatheads, apparently, because their craniums were allowed to remain naturally flat on top and were not pressed to the wedge shape—as was conjectured by Spalding. But, besides this indirect evidence that it was not the Flatheads, we have abundant direct testimony that it was the Nez Perces. Cushing Eells is quoted as saying “they were Nez Perces only.” Rev. Daniel Lee, in the book entitled “Ten Years in Oregon,” says they were “probably Nez Perces.” In an article published in the Illinois *Patriot*, in October, 1833, an account is given of the visit of the Indians, and it was said “Three of these Indians were from what is called the Flathead tribe, and one of them from another tribe which I do not recollect that General Clark mentioned—probably, however, from the adjoining tribe called the Pierced Nose Indians.” The latter comes most nearly what seems to be the actual fact—although reversed. The three were from the Nez

Perces, and the fourth was an adopted Flathead, but belonging to the Nez Perce tribe. This at least is the tradition still held among the Nez Perces, as ascertained by Miss Kate Macbeth, long a missionary at Kamiah and Lapwai. Mention is made on this point of the tall silk hat, which was considered as the sign of the white man, along with traditions dating from the Lewis and Clark visit, of the rods of steel from which the white men drew fire, and the trumpet that brayed like a trapper's donkey. The idea of the hat as a special mark of the white man's dignity is also confirmed by traditions still alive among the tribe, as of Watkuese, already mentioned in connection with Lewis and Clark. The idea, according to Miss Macbeth, of sending a deputation east was to find Lewis and Clark, whom the Nez Perces remembered as the Great White Brothers, who not only had so many wonderful weapons and accouterments, but had showed the most fraternal disposition, and had cured many of their people of sickness. It was from a desire to learn the true form of worship, a subject which, as seen from the account given by Bonneville, was of the utmost concern to them, that they determined to follow the trail of their Great Brothers and learn from what they considered perfectly reliable sources what was their duty in order to merit the favor of the Great Spirit. As intimated by Bonneville, Pierre Pambrun had already given them instructions in the form of the Catholic worship, which they were following in great simplicity. But there is

indication that they had heard from Protestant sources that the true worship and faith was not to be found in the Catholic forms, but in a book, given to man directly from Heaven, and that the worship that pleased the great Spirit must be received from this revelation. Who it was that thus told them of the Book can be only conjectured. Possibly it was Jedediah Smith, who was a man of piety, and was frequently through their country. Their most intense desire now, therefore, was to find the Great Book, and to learn just as God had taught to men, and in His own words, what they should do.

The first report to the country of the desire of these Indians to get the Bible, was published in the New York *Christian Advocate*, March 1, 1833. This was in the form of a communication from G. P. Disoway, Esq., who was connected with the removal and settlement of Wyandotte Indians upon lands west of the Mississippi. It was written by him February 18 previous, and inclosed a letter from his agent, William Walker, an interpreter and member of the nation, dated January 19. Disoway was struck with the contents of Walker's communication, and inclosed with it a strong appeal to send missionaries at once to instruct these people. He said: "How deeply affecting is the circumstance of the four natives traveling on foot three thousand miles through thick forests and (over) extensive prairies, sincere searchers after the truth! The story has scarcely a parallel in history. . . . There is not perhaps west of the Rocky



Mountains any portion of the Indians that presents at this moment a spectacle so full of interest to contemplative minds as the Flathead tribe. Not a thought of converting or civilizing them enters the mind of the sordid demoralizing hunters and fur traders. These simple children of nature even shrink from the loose morality and inhumanities often introduced among them by the white man. Let the church awake from her slumbers, and go forth in her strength to the salvation of these wandering sons of our native forests. We are citizens of this vast universe, and our life embraces not merely a moment, but eternity itself. Thus exalted, what can be more worthy of our high destination than to befriend our species and those efforts that are making to release immortal spirits from the chains of error and superstition, and to bring them to the knowledge of the true God."

Although under the conventional religious forms, here was a depth of humanitarian spirit fully equal to the simple faith of the Nez Perces that the White Brother would communicate his revelation<sup>1</sup> to the Red Brother, simply on account of the unity of the species.

Walker's letter, written from Sandusky, Ohio, after taking note of the examination he made of the proposed lands of the Wyandottes, dwells chiefly upon his meeting with the Nez Perces, whom he found on a visit to General Clark, at St. Louis. He says: "I will here relate an anecdote, if I may so call it. Immediately after we landed in St. Louis, on our way

to the west, I proceeded to General Clark's, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, to present our letters of introduction from the Secretary of War, and to receive the same from him to the different agents of the upper country. While in his office and transacting business with him, he informed me that three chiefs from the Flathead nation were in his house, and were quite sick, and that one, the fourth, had died a few days ago. They were from the west of the Rocky Mountains. Curiosity prompted me to step into the adjoining room to see them, having never seen any but often heard of them. I was struck with their appearance. They differ in appearance from any tribe of Indians I have ever seen; small in size, delicately formed, small limbs, and the most exact symmetry throughout, except the head. I had always supposed from their being called 'Flatheads' that the head was actually flat on top. But this is not the case. . . . The distance they had traveled on foot was nearly three thousand miles to see General Clark, their Great Father [Brother more likely, as Clark thus mentions he designated himself, while he taught the Nez Perces to call the President Great Father] as they call him, he being the first American officer they ever became acquainted with, and having much confidence in him, as they said, upon very important matters. General Clark related to me their mission, and, my dear friend, it is impossible for me to describe to you my feelings while listening to his narrative. I will here relate it as briefly as I can. It

appeared that some white man had penetrated into their country and had happened to be a spectator at one of their religious meetings, which they scrupulously perform at stated periods. He informed them that their mode of worshipping the Supreme Being was radically wrong, and instead of being acceptable and pleasing was displeasing to Him. He also informed them that the white people away toward the rising sun had been put in possession of the true mode of worshipping the Great Spirit. They had a book containing directions how to conduct themselves to enjoy His favor and converse with Him, and with this guide no one need go astray. . . . Upon receiving this information they held a national council to take this subject into consideration. . . . They accordingly deputed four of their chiefs to proceed to St. Louis to see their Great Father, General Clark, to inquire of him, having no doubt but he would tell them the whole truth about it.

“ They arrived at St. Louis and presented themselves to General Clark. The latter was somewhat puzzled, being sensible of the responsibility that rested upon him. He, however, proceeded, by informing them that what they had been told by the white men in their own country was true. He then went into a succinct history of man from the creation down to the advent of the Saviour, explained to them all the moral precepts of the Bible, expounded to them the decalogue, informed them of the advent of the Saviour, His life, precepts, His death, resurrection and

ascension, and the relation He stands to man as mediator, the judgment, that He will judge the world, etc.

“ Poor fellows, they were not all permitted to return home to their people with the intelligence. Two died in St. Louis, and the remaining two, although somewhat indisposed, set out for their native land. Whether they reached home or not is not known. The change of diet and climate operated very severely upon their health. If they died on the way, peace to their manes! They died inquirers after the truth. I was informed that the Flatheads as a nation have the fewest vices of any tribe of Indians on the Continent of America.”

The article in the Illinois *Patriot* was published in October, of the same year, 1833. According to this, the article of Disoway's with Walker's letter—as it would seem—had created so much interest at the session of the Illinois Synod—Presbyterian—that a committee was appointed to investigate the account, and report. The report brought in dealt, apparently, not only with the Indians, but included descriptions of the entire Oregon country, “ which ”—as the paper added—“ is at no distant day to be occupied by citizens from all parts of the United States.” The very wise opinion was also expressed that if any would go out beforehand and teach the Indians the arts of peace, they would forestall the wars of cruel savagery that usually accompanied the settlement of a new country; and continued, “ It is surprising that our general government is so slow to discover that

by establishing schools and sending out good men to instruct the Indians in the principles of the Christian religion and the arts of civilized life, it will contribute to the safety and prosperity of all our frontier settlers." Following the meeting of the Synod, there was a meeting of citizens, and a committee of two, probably residents of Jacksonville, Rev. Lucian Farnham and Mr. Julius Reed, were sent to St. Louis to investigate not only the reported visit of the Nez Perces, but to gather practical information of the country west of the Rocky Mountains. They returned with the report that "it was a fact that the Indians had visited General Clark; they remained several months with General Clark, and visited all the places of worship in the city. During their stay, two of them died; in the spring the others returned to their countrymen, very favorably impressed, and highly gratified with the kind treatment they received."

George Catlin, a painter of Indian life, was also on a tour to the Rocky Mountains in the summer of 1833, and went in the same company—the annual trapping expedition to the Rocky Mountains—with which the Nez Perces made their return home. He became acquainted with them, and it is said painted their portraits, but learned nothing of the object of their mission. Returning east in the autumn he heard the now numerous reports of their religious purpose, and was at first much disposed to discredit them. But to assure himself before either denying or affirming

their correctness—his family and others being deeply religious probably appealing to him—he took the precaution to write to Clark himself as to their mission. Clark at once wrote, “The story is true; that was the only object of their visit.” He then said that it should be published.

The general object and design of this visit of Oregon—now Idaho—Indians, to St. Louis, is thus well established. Another point, that they were deeply disappointed that they could not receive the Book, does not have so much support. It hardly could have this, as General Clark, if on account of his religious faith, he did not feel warranted in furnishing the Bible, except under some religious instructors, would not have been so likely to mention that fact. It does not appear that they received the book; though having been instructed by Clark himself; and might naturally feel disappointment. A speech expressing this feeling, by one of the chiefs, has been widely published. It is stated rather vaguely for authority that it was taken down “by one of the clerks in Clark’s office at the moment.” It is said by Mowry that Spalding was told by one of the Indians, years afterward, the substance of the speech. The speech does not have an altogether genuine sound, and where it was first published is not stated. If the sentiment was expressed by the Nez Perce it has probably been much altered in its manner, owing to several translations. If it were made in his own tongue, it is not known who was the interpreter; the name of



the transcriber is not given, nor does it appear to have been entered upon any government report. However, as a speech that has been widely attributed to Oregon Indians it is worth inserting. The chief is said to have ended an official call and supper to which Clark had invited him on the eve of his return as follows:

“ I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friends of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly opened, for more light for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. The two fathers who came with me—the braves of many winters and wars—we leave asleep here by your great water. They were tired in many moons and their moccasins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man’s Book of Heaven. You took me where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirits with candles, and the Book was not there. You showed me the images of good spirits and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them. I am going back the long sad trail to my people of the dark land. You make my feet heavy with burdens of gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them.

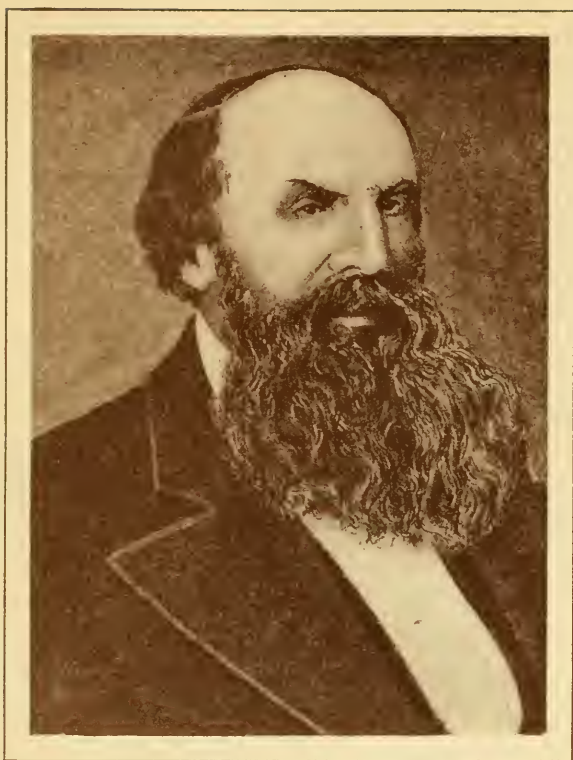
When I tell my poor blind people after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no white man's book to make the way plain to them. I have no more words."

It is stated by Mowry that it was this speech that attracted the eye of Catlin, and he doubted its authenticity until informed by Clark of the Nez Perces' object. It is not stated in what publication it was seen. The image brought up by the speech is rather of the conventional Indian, with his moons and braves, and old men, and other allusions. Yet the desire of the Nez Perces for a worship directly authenticated by written revelation was very strong, and so well known among the trappers and mountain men that they sometimes turned missionary, preaching and giving packs of gambling cards in exchange for ponies or furs, assuring the tribe that these were "the Book."

The Methodist Church first took up the labor of supplying the Indians of Oregon with religious teachers. A vigorous appeal was made before the General Conference by Wilbur Fiske, of the Wesleyan University. Receiving encouragement he set about finding a man to send to the field, and wrote to Jason Lee, a former pupil of his, but at that time a

missionary to the Indians in his own native town of Stanstead, Quebec. Lee was a tall, somewhat diffident young man, raw boned and athletic, without the graces of cultivated society, but of a most earnest zeal, and capable of almost any labor and ready to encounter any hardship. He was at once interested in the proposition of Dr. Fiske, and repaired in the spring of 1833 to Boston. He was there received as a member of the New England Conference and ordained by Bishop Hedding, and appointed as Superintendent of a mission to Oregon. His nephew, Daniel Lee, and a lay member, Cyrus Shepard, were appointed as associates. Opportunely for the mission, Wyeth was just returning from Oregon, and making ready for his second adventure across the continent, and providing for a transport of goods by sea in the brig "May Dacre." The missionaries decided to accompany him across the Plains, and to send their goods by his vessel.

A more detailed account of the Methodist Mission, or colony, will be given later. It may be noted here, however, that Lee and his two assistants came safely with Wyeth to the Snake River country, where the Captain stopped to build Fort Hall. Here was met Thomas McKay, the omnipresent Hudson's Bay Company's leader wherever competition or danger was to be encountered. With McKay and Stewart, an English nobleman, Lee, and the scientists Nuttall and Townsend, and their respective parties, went on to Walla Walla. It seemed best here, although they



REV. H. H. SPAULDING

A Pioneer Presbyterian Missionary of 1836.



had in mind the object of establishing a mission to the tribe who had sent for them, in the Columbia Valley, to proceed to Fort Vancouver and to confer with Dr. McLoughlin where to plant their first mission. They left their horses at Fort Walla Walla, and being most courteously offered passage down the Columbia in a bateau of the Hudson's Bay people, intrusted themselves in what seemed a frail craft for so powerful a stream, and after eleven days on the river, and one hundred and fifty-two days from the Missouri frontier, reached the fort. This was about the middle of September.

They were received with the utmost kindness by Dr. McLoughlin and all the gentlemen at the fort, and were deeply impressed that here was a strong and pivotal center. By Dr. McLoughlin the arrival of the missionaries is thus noted. "The Rev. Jason Lee and Daniel Lee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with three laymen, came overland from the States with Mr. Wyeth in 1834. They brought their horses and cattle with them, but their supplies came in the 'May Dacre.' Messrs. Lee left the States with the intention of settling in the Flathead country as missionaries to these Indians, but changed their minds and settled in the Willamette country, and as they left their cattle at Walla Walla, and they were rather weak after their long journey, they asked and obtained the loan of cattle from me."

In another document—published by the Pioneer Association—he says, "In 1834, Messrs. Jason and



Daniel Lee, and Messrs. (Courtney M.) Walker and P. L. Edwards came with Mr. Wyeth to establish a mission in the Flathead country. I observed to them that it was too dangerous for them to establish a mission [there]; that to do good to the Indians they must establish themselves where they could collect them around them; teach them first to cultivate the ground and live more comfortably than they do by hunting, and as they do this teach them religion; that the Willamette afforded them a fine field, and they ought to go there, and they could get the same assistance as settlers."

It is quite certain thus, that upon meeting with McLoughlin, and seeing the situation of the country, their ideas as to the proper location of a mission underwent a change. The needs of the establishments at Vancouver and French Prairie appealed strongly to their minds. John Ball, of the Wyeth party, who had some education, had been engaged to teach a school at Vancouver for the benefit of the children of the factors and gentlemen there, and Solomon H. Smith, of the same party, had continued the school, and had also opened a school on French Prairie, near the homes of Gervais and Labonte. Dr. McLoughlin was very anxious that the school should be continued, and proposed that Cyrus Shepard act in the capacity of teacher. Moreover much interest was felt in hearing the missionaries preach, and an invitation was extended to hold religious services. With so much power were the services conducted that a num-

ber of the hearers expressed an awakened interest in religion. Dr. McLoughlin himself, at a later service, led the list in a substantial contribution to help the work along, amounting to the sum of \$130, accompanied by a most kindly note signed by McLoughlin, closing "and they pray our Heavenly Father, without whose assistance we can do nothing, that of His infinite mercy He may vouchsafe to bless and prosper your pious endeavors."

The question of location was of the highest importance, but taking into consideration the needs of the field both to whites and natives in Western Oregon, the friendly attitude of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose chief factor was so able to help or hinder their work; and the conclusion that they must rather establish a settlement and school to which Indian youth might come and learn a Christian education, than to attempt evangelization among tribes nomadic even in their own grounds, they were induced to follow McLoughlin's counsel, and located an establishment but a short distance above the farm of Joseph Gervais, at Chemaewae, on the Willamette. Gray, an impartial observer of this mission, as he was himself connected with the Presbyterian work established later, says that by October 6th the goods brought on the "May Dacre" were taken by Lee to his station, and his manner of prosecuting his undertaking is coupled on Gray's page with that of Whitman—no higher compliment being within Gray's reach.

“ Rev. Jason Lee,” he says, “ like Whitman with his old wagon, had undertaken a work he meant to accomplish. His religion was practical. Work, labor, preach and practice his own precepts, and demonstrate the truth of his own doctrine. Religion and labor were synonymous with him, and well did the noble Shepard, though a lay member of the mission and the church, labor and sustain him. During the winter of 1834-5, they were wholly occupied in building their houses and preparing for the cultivation of the land for their own subsistence. Rev. Jason Lee set the example. He held the plow with an Indian boy to drive, in commencing his farming operations. The first year they produced enough for home consumption in wheat, peas, oats and barley, and abundance of potatoes, with a few barrels of salt salmon.” And the work of the first year is thus summarized: “ Daniel Lee soon falls sick and Edwards is dissatisfied. They both arrange to leave the country in the ‘May Dacre’; (but) Lee is advised to go to the Sandwich Islands and Edwards is induced to undertake an independent school at Champoeg, Shepard toils on with his Indian and half native school. Mr. (Jason) Lee preaches and labors at the mission among the French, and at Vancouver.”

This is a picture of these young men from the United States, sent on the impulse of religious zeal, with the first bloom of enthusiasm gone, and sick or dispirited, but still battling on bravely, although hardly at first reaching, or even touching, the pri-

mary object of their effort. In this situation Jason Lee was doing an immense amount of enforced thinking, which led to comprehensive plans later how to continue the work in his selected field.

Jason Lee came of an honorable and Christian, if not distinguished, family. His father, Daniel Lee, was born in Connecticut when that State was a wilderness. Near by, in a log cabin, embowered in the deep woods, was born his mother. . . . After their marriage Mr. Lee and his excellent wife remained in their native State for almost fifteen years, and then removed to Rutland, Vt., and thence, after a few years, joined the band of hardy New Englanders that had settled Stanstead, in Canada East, about the beginning of the year 1806.

. . . . Of this parentage Jason Lee was born in Stanstead in 1803. His early training under the strenuous exactions of a life in the wilderness was of the kind that builds a sturdy and independent manhood, physically and mentally. . . . Jason Lee was converted in the twenty-third year of his age. For two or three years thereafter he continued at his accustomed manual toil, while all the time the thought was growing upon him that God had other business for him to do. When this thought had become so deeply a consciousness that to resist it was to fight against God, he laid down the implements of labor, and in the autumn of 1827 entered the Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham, Mass.

. . . . His most intimate friend in school and ever thereafter was Osmon C. Baker (afterward a bishop). . . . Mr. Baker drew the following picture of the man and his work while in school: "He was a large, athletic young man, six feet and three inches in height, with a fully developed frame and a constitution of iron. His piety was deep and uniform and his life in a very uncommon degree pure and exemplary."

"Before and during his residence at Wilbraham, Mr. Lee's mind had been deeply impressed with the feeling that the work and duty of his life would be to live and labor for the Indian tribes. This feeling remained after his return to Stanstead, and while he was engaged in teaching in the Stanstead Academy. Himself and Osmon C. Baker had almost formed plans for united labor in pagan lands. Under date of March, 1831, he wrote to Mr. Baker as follows: 'I have not forgotten the red men of the West, though I am not yet

The American Board, which was a missionary organization of both the Presbyterian and Congregationalist denominations for sending missionaries to foreign lands, also took notice of the desire of the

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among them. O, that I had someone like yourself to go with me and help me in the arduous work with whom I could hold sweet converse. Or that I could be assured that I could embrace you in the wilds and have you for a companion as long as the good Lord should have need of us in the forests. I could cheerfully forego all the pleasure I receive from the society of friends here, tear myself from the embrace of my nearest and dearest relatives, and go (as John before our Lord) and prepare the way before you. But I am building castles in the air. No, no! That I fear can never be.' . . . While waiting and wondering whereunto this strange thing would grow Mr. Lee received a communication from Dr. Fisk relative to his undertaking the establishment of a mission among the people whose strange call had thus awakened the church. Mr. Lee after due consideration consented to the proposition of Dr. Fisk provided he could honorably detach himself from the service of the Wesleyan board, to which he had already offered himself. In due time all these arrangements were satisfactorily made.—Rev. H. K. Hines.

Rev. Jason Lee, of Stanstead, Canada East, a man of light hair, blue eyes, fair complexion, spare habit, above ordinary height, a little stoop shouldered, with strong nerve and indomitable will, yet a meek, warm-hearted and humble Christian, gaining by his affable and easy manners the esteem of all who became acquainted with him.—W. H. Gray.

Cyrus Shepard was a devoted Christian and a faithful laborer for the advancement of the objects of the mission and the general welfare of all in the country. We have never learned that he had an enemy or slanderer while he lived in it. On his first arrival he taught the Hudson's Bay school at Vancouver, consisting of children belonging to persons in the employ of the company, till the mission buildings were ready, when he gathered a large school of Indian and French half-breed children and was quite successful in teaching the rudiments of an English education.

Mr. P. L. Edwards, also of Missouri. . . . But little is known of him; the inducements to become a permanent settler do not appear in his case.—Ibid.

Oregon Indians to receive religious teachers. In 1834 they took the subject up, and decided to send two men forward first and examine the field, and report to them before equipping a band. Samuel Parker, a well educated minister of Massachusetts and New York, and fifty-six years old, and Marcus Whitman, of Rushville, N. Y., and a practicing physician, were selected. Whitman was then but thirty-three. It was too late to join the trappers' caravan that year, and not until March, 1835, did Parker begin his journey, reaching St. Louis, April 4th. Whitman, by another route arrived somewhat in advance. Joining the trappers they reached the continental divide August 10th. Parker, who was a geologist, made many interesting notes of the topography, soil, rocks, etc., and inserted in his journal, published in 1838, the first published suggestion of a Pacific railway through the South Pass—which he says offered no difficulties greater than had already been surmounted in passing the Green Mountains with railroad. This suggestion Gray attributes as in the first instance from Whitman.

At the rendezvous, which they reached August 12th, they met with the Nez Perce Indians, with whom they soon were on the most friendly terms, and were strongly urged to come to their country and establish a mission. As indicating that Whitman, although much the younger man, was still the leading spirit, the following from Parker's journal may be inserted here:



“ The Nez Perce and Flathead Indians present an interesting field for missionary labor, white for the harvest; and the indications of divine Providence in regard to it are made plain by their anxiety to obtain Christian knowledge. Taking the circumstances under deliberate and prayerful consideration, in regard to these Indians, we came to the conclusion that, though many other important stations might be found, this would be one. So desirable did this object appear that Dr. Whitman proposed to return with the caravan, and obtain associates to come out with him the next year with the then returning caravan, and establish a mission among the people, and by so doing save at least a year in bringing the gospel among them. In view of the importance of the object I readily consented to the proposal, and to go alone with the Indians the remainder of the exploring tour. Dr. Whitman, upon further consideration, felt some misgivings about leaving me, and feared that he should be blamed by the Christian public. I expressed my desire that no disquietude should be felt for me.”

This shows Whitman to have been a man of sharp observation, quick to reach a conclusion, and disposed to carry his enterprise to the point of temerity. He was entirely correct in surmising that he would be blamed if upon the journey through the mountains to the Columbia and Fort Vancouver Parker had met with serious difficulty. As a matter of fact, this elderly gentleman, who was much of a pedant, and heretofore unused to stirring events, suffered much

from fatigue and sickness crossing the Salmon River Mountains, and at one time believed that he must leave his body in the wilderness; and even felt much disquietude in intrusting himself in a slender canoe to the tumultuous current of the Columbia from Wallula down to Vancouver. But although a pedant and of a formal and conventional type of mind, he had an abundance of Yankee grit, and did not one moment quail from his lonely task. He collected much valuable information, and placing this in the tractate style and religious tone relished by the churches of the times, contributed very largely toward spreading information of Oregon among the most substantial people of the Eastern States. Many of his historical and scientific observations are expressed in the most clear and direct language, and could not but tend to interest the educated classes in research in the West. It was a work tending greatly to elevate the Oregon question from the simple level of commercial values. After completing his observations he accepted passage to Honolulu, and thence to New York. This was the conclusion of his work for Oregon, but as such Samuel Parker stands forth as a very respectable figure, showing that the typical New England minister, as well as the trader, could step out and perform a journey of some twenty thousand miles all told, and carry his habits of observations learned among the hills and around the lakes of his native region, for the benefit of the commonwealth about to rise upon the shores of the Pacific.

Whitman was altogether a different style of man, quick to adapt himself to circumstances; drinking with his hand from a stream and disposed to discard as unnecessary all but his butcher knife in observing his meals—somewhat to the disgust of Parker. He also adapted himself easily to the rude ways of the trappers, who greatly shocked the fine sense of Parker; and was very careful to bear his full part in the duties of the march, and to attend upon any men who might sustain injury. By “his off-hand, easy ways and manner of accommodating himself to circumstances, and his kind-heartedness, and promptness to relieve all who needed his professional skill, he won the esteem of all with whom he traveled.” He was gladly allowed a place with Bridger on the return for the mission party that he intended to organize. He also so far won the confidence of the Indians that two sons of a Nez Perce chief were allowed to return East with him, with the object of learning the English language and becoming teachers or interpreters to their people.

Arriving safely at his own home, and making a favorable report to the Missionary Board, Whitman was commissioned to organize a party, and selected Rev. H. H. Spalding and wife, and W. H. Gray; and consummating his marriage with Narcissa Prentiss, was ready to return with the trappers in 1836. Two days before reaching the rendezvous on Green River, they were met by a party of ten Nez Perce, among whom were Takensuates and Ish-hol-hol-hoats-hoats;



**HAL-HAL-TLOS-SOT, THE LAWYER**

Head Chief of the Nez Percés.

Reproduced from "Life of General Isaac I. Stevens." This engraving follows an original drawing made by Gustave Sohon, a soldier who accompanied General Stevens on his treaty making trips.



the latter was the famous chief known later as the Lawyer, and at the feast held in their honor—to the whites rather a rude feast, but to the Indians, whose contribution to the viands was a piece of venison, a memorable event,—as he said afterward, his heart became one with the Suapies, or Americans. Lawyer's unswerving friendship, and that of his family, made this simple meal on the Sandy almost a national event.

From the rendezvous to the Columbia at Old Fort Walla Walla the mission party was conducted by the band of Indians, and from Walla Walla they went by bateaux to Fort Vancouver to pay their respects to McLoughlin and to confer with him as to permanent location. On the way over the mountains Takensuates took special charge of Mr. Spalding and his wife, and succeeded in making so pleasing an impression that upon parting at Wallula Spalding promised that if he would be at the same spot on his return he would go with him to his country, and if found suitable establish there a mission.

At the rendezvous the missionaries had met Captain Wyeth on his return East, who informed them of the disposition of the Hudson's Bay Company to crush out American opposition, but added, "You have brought your wives along; if I do not greatly mistake the feelings of the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company, they will be anxious to have their influence in teaching their own wives and children, and you will meet with a different reception from any other Amer-



ican party that has gone into the country." This prediction was not unverified. The entire party were charmed with the cordiality of their reception. The cultivated farm, the trees growing, the garden, and the splendid appearance of McLoughlin and Douglas gave them, as it had all who came in contact with fort life, an entirely new impression of Oregon. Mrs. Whitman, whose grace and accomplishments had already been appreciated by the mountain men at the rendezvous, found here at Vancouver a society of the most perfect gentlemen; nor did she by any means ignore their native wives or half-caste children, singing for them morning and evening. Whitman was soon upon intimate terms with McLoughlin, and formed a friendship that lasted to the end of life. He had formed the plan as he came down the Columbia to plant his station at the Dalles; desiring to have access to the river and sea for supplies from American ships that might enter the Columbia. From this, however, he was dissuaded by McLoughlin, who informed him that the Dalles Indians were a mongrel race, and that mission work among them would be hopeless. The Cayuses, who lived on the upper waters of the Walla Walla and the Umatilla, and ranged over the Blue Mountains, and were closely connected with the Nez Perces and the Flatheads, were far better material. They were horsemen, equal to British dragoons, and though few comparatively in numbers were the dominant power in the Columbia Valley. The question of supplies he treated as he

had with Lee. Anything that was needed would be furnished from his own posts or mills.

Returning up the river, Whitman examined the Walla Walla Valley, and found the Indians desirous of having teachers among them. An understanding was reached, upon which the tribe formally allowed him a location, in return for which he was to establish a school, teach them agriculture and white men's industry, and religion. He was by no means unfavorably impressed with the Cayuses, and was at once charmed with this vast agricultural district. The capabilities of the soil of the creek and river bottoms for agriculture were at once appreciated, and the unlimited range of the undulating plains and of the Blue Mountain foot hills gave promise for pasturage for thousands of cattle and sheep, which he wished to persuade the Indians to keep in place of their great herds of comparatively worthless ponies.

Spalding was met according to promise by Takuat at Wallula, with a train of ponies to take him into the Nez Perce country, about 150 miles eastward. On the way thither he was led over the immense and frequently high and rugged ridges that skirt the Blue Mountains and border the intractable Snake. He felt many misgivings as he proceeded day after day, and found the country grow sterner and totally naked of timber and badly watered. Finally, over the last ridges, he was brought to a hill overlooking the Lapwai, a stream meandering through a deep valley and

bordered with timber. "Here, if anywhere in our country," said the Nez Percés, "the land is good." Hesitating still, in order to examine the locality more carefully, and seeing that here was a well watered valley, of a deep black soil, with an abundance of timber for fuel, shelter, shade and building purposes, and that the surrounding uplands were covered with a growth of the universal bunch grass, Spalding was entirely satisfied, and to the great delight of the Indian chief and his band, declared that he would make here his home. Returning then to Wallula for his goods and Mrs. Spalding, they at once repaired to Lapwai, and began to erect buildings and also to teach the eager natives. Astonishing interest was shown; the buffalo hunt was forgotten, and although Spalding intimated that the tribe had better prepare for winter, the chief said that nothing was now so important as to learn the Book of Heaven, which had been sent to them, and that God would provide for their wants. The winter proving very mild and game remaining in the valley seemed to justify their simple faith, and probably in no mission of which we have a record was there greater success from the beginning.

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Rev. Samuel Parker, of Ithaca, New York, a man of good education and refinement, and exceedingly set in his opinions of men and things, came to explore the country and report to the American Board as to the feasibility of establishing a mission among the Indians, one of the missionaries of the American Board from the Sandwich Islands having visited the coast in an American ship several years previous and made an unfavorable report on account of the fur trade influence against American traders, giving the impression that American mis-

sionaries would not be tolerated in the country. . . . Was rather fastidious.

Dr. Marcus Whitman, of Rushville, New York, . . . . A man of easy, *don't care*, habits; that could become all things to all men, and yet a sincere and earnest man, speaking his mind before he thought the second time, . . . . correcting and changing his views when good reasons were presented, yet, when fixed in pursuit of an object, adhering to it with unflinching tenacity. A stranger would think him fickle and stubborn, yet he was sincere and kind, and generous to a fault, seldom manifesting fear of any dangers that were around him: at times he would become animated and earnest in conversation or argument. In his profession he was a bold practitioner, and generally successful. He was above medium height, of spare habit, peculiar hair, a portion of each (separate hair) being white and a dark brown, so that it might be called iron gray; deep blue eyes, and a large mouth.—W. H. Gray.

Mrs. Whitman, formerly Miss Narcissa Prentiss, of Prattsburg, Steuben County, New York, was a lady of refined feelings and commanding appearance. She had very light hair, light, fresh complexion, and light blue eyes. Her features were large, her form full and round. At the time she arrived in the country, in the prime of life, she was considered a fine, noble looking woman, affable and free to converse with all she met. Her conversation was animated and cheerful. Firmness in her was natural, and to some, especially the Indians, it was repulsive. She had been brought up in comparative comfort, and moved in the best religious society in the place of her residence. She was a good singer, and one of her amusements, as well as that of her traveling companions, was to teach the doctor to sing, which she did with considerable success—that is, he could sing the native songs without much difficulty.

Mrs. Spalding was the daughter of a plain, substantial farmer by the name of Hart, of Oneida County, New York. She was above the medium height, slender in form, with coarse features, dark brown hair, blue eyes, rather dark complexion, coarse [contralto] voice, of a serious turn of mind, and quick in understanding language. In fact she was remarkable in acquiring the Nez Perce language, so as to understand and converse with the natives quite easily by the time they reached their station at Lapwai. She could paint indifferently in water colors, and had been taught, while young, all the useful branches of domestic life; could spin, weave, sew, etc.; could prepare an excellent meal at short notice, was generally sociable, but not forward in, conversations with gentlemen. With the native wom-

en Mrs. Spalding always seemed easy and cheerful, and had their unbounded confidence and respect. She was considered by the Indian men as a brave, fearless woman, and was respected and esteemed by all. Though she was frequently left alone for days, her husband being absent on business, but a single attempted insult was ever offered her. . . . Then she gave a rebuff so thorough to the attempted, or contemplated, insult that to hide his disgrace the Indian fled from the tribe, not venturing to remain among them. In fact a majority of the tribe were in favor of hanging the Indian, but Mrs. Spalding requested that they allow him to live that he might repent of his evil designs and do better.—W. H. Gray.

The voice of Miss Prentiss was of remarkable sweetness. She was a graceful blonde, stately and dignified in her bearing, without a particle of affectation. When preparing to leave for Oregon the church held a farewell service and the minister gave out the well known hymn:

Yes, my native land I love thee,  
All thy scenes I love them well;  
Friends, connections, happy country  
Can I bid you all farewell?

The whole congregation joined heartily in the singing, but before the hymn was half through, one by one they ceased, and audible sobs were heard in every part of the great audience. The last stanza was sung by the sweet voice of Mrs. Whitman alone—clear, musical and unwavering.—Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, *Magazine American History*, 1884. (Quoted by Mowry.)

Dr. Marcus Whitman and Miss Narcissa Prentiss, two of the first missionaries sent out by the American Board beyond the Rocky Mountains, were united in marriage by the pastor, Rev. Leverett Hull. Some who were present could never describe, without tears, the circumstances, and especially the incident of the bride singing the missionary hymn in a strong, clear voice after all others had broken down with emotion.—Newspaper Clipping. Mowry.

Dr. Whitman impressed me as a man of strong sterling character and lots of push; but he was not a great talker.—J. S. Seelye; 1895; *Ibid*.

Marcus Whitman was born in Rushville, N. Y., September 4, 1802. He was descended from good New England stock, characterized by both intellectual and moral strength. He came from a long-lived family. It is related that when an infant he was saved providen-

tially from burning. . . . His boyhood was spent in a pioneer home with many privations; but this life was such as to give him the best preparation for heroic and manly deeds. He was early deprived of the care and guidance of his father, who died when he was eight years old. This loss obliged him to take an active part in helping his mother. The early exercise of his physical and mental powers resulted not only in a strong, well developed body, but in what proved to be of the utmost importance to him in after life, great self-reliance. . . . He first united with the Congregational church in his native town, but subsequently he was member and ruling elder of the Presbyterian church at Wheeler, N. Y., from which church he was dismissed when he went to Oregon.

He received a good common school education, and studied Latin under the direction of Rev. Moses Hallock, of Plainville, and Rev. David Page, of Rushville. It was his intention at this time to enter the ministry, but some physical ailment led him to study medicine. He pursued a course of medical study at the Berkshire Medical College at Pittsfield, Mass., from which institution he received his diploma. He practiced medicine four years in Canada, and then returned to his old home with the full intention of devoting himself to the work of his chosen profession in his native State. These plans, however, were frustrated, and he became part owner with his brother in a sawmill. This business life prepared him still further for the great work that fell to him subsequently as a practical and progressive missionary and broad-minded patriot.—Mowry.





## CHAPTER V

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WILLAMETTE



UPON pausing an instant to observe the effects of the decided movements noticed in the last chapter, one cannot but notice a change. The sensation is altogether different, as if passing into a new atmosphere; or, into a much raised temperature, as from winter to spring. In his recent work giving more particularly a narrative of the Methodist mission, H. K. Hines, describing the first sermon preached at Fort Vancouver by Jason Lee, September 26, 1834, to an audience "in which were mixed the highest intelligence and the deepest ignorance—American, English, Scotch, Irish, Japanese, Kanakas, half-breeds and Indians"—has, with pardonable denominational fervor, but with great justice, remarked: "The scene had a strange significance—an uncomprehended import. It was the introduction of a new force—a moral and spiritual force—into the elements that had hitherto given mold and character to Oregon. . . . The auditors little appreciated it. To them it was only an incident to vary the hitherto unbroken monotony of trade and revel, of revel and trade, which had swung their wearing alternations until even savage and sordid hearts resented them. Even the preacher could hardly have augured the future of which this hour was the morning star."

It was simply that American life had opened another of its vast accumulation of motives and projected them upon Oregon. This was in striking con-

formity with the law of social evolution observed, though with much slower pace, in all previous historical development. Nowhere is there an illustration of the operation of the course of social development more clearly shown than in the order in which American life—making a more or less harmonious juncture with European life somewhat in advance—unfolded its phases in Oregon. It showed that it was a genuine embryo of civilization, in that it observed with undeviating fidelity the steps by which civilization itself had arisen from primitive barbarism. Succeeding the period of simple dispersion, nobly represented in the person of Ledyard, and the period of adventure, begun with Gray, and closed with Wyeth, corresponding to the nomadic eras of primitive tribes, was added the period of fixed interests, introduced, as well shown, by Jason Lee. It was in conformance with high purpose, and indicative of high destiny, that Ledyard failed, and that Wyeth failed; and their failure but led the embryo forward speedily to meet a propitious hour for birth as a commonwealth. Failure under the form of simple dispersion of energy, or under the form of nomadic, or periodic forms, served but to hasten the form under fixed and continuous industry, and gave these lower forms no interest or power to antagonize and destroy the higher form as it began to develop.

Some established form of worship, or religious culture, has ever been at the beginning of community life. The “priest after the order of Melchizedek,

king of Salem," has preceded even the patriarchal form of society. Melchizedek was before Abraham. Someone to act as a judge of justice, and as an intermediary of peaceful relations, has ever been required to furnish motives for people to live in neighborly, or neighborhood, relations. It was this that Jason Lee was now bringing to Oregon. Almost immediately connected with it was the introduction of the American family. This Whitman first brought. Lee had more particularly the instincts of the priest—one whose enthusiasm was to minister in holy things, and impart to others what he deemed to be divine grace. That this was what he held to be revealed truth, rather than any rites or forms, as of older religions, and that he did not assume to act as a mediator between a soul and its Maker, did not change his sentiment as holding himself a minister of sacred things to men. Whitman had more particularly the instincts of the home-maker. He wrote Miss Prentiss, soon after leaving the frontier, that he was sorry she had not come the first year. He also wrote her of promising openings for homes for her friends among the Pawnees or Otoes, as farmers, blacksmiths, etc., with sufficient pay to make a home and teach the Indians also. Upon this line of evangelism, by actual work with the hands among the natives and making American homes, his thought dwelt continually. Salvation by community effort and home life, rather than individual salvation by resignation of the will, was the feature of Christian ef-



fort that he understood. In Mrs. Whitman, however, even more than in Whitman, was the finest type of the home-maker. This, as intimated, was the feature that made her objectionable to the Indians; but it made her the champion of the American home. With great feeling, and almost indignation, we find her saying that the pioneers and missionaries ought not to sink, in their home arrangements, to the level of the life around them; but lift it to their level. Mrs. Spalding gained her remarkable influence by approximating as nearly as she could in her ways to the Indian life. This Mrs. Whitman would not do.

With the Lees, and with Whitman and Spalding and their wives, were added the interests that made community life and growth possible, and indeed inevitable, in Oregon. Alluding to this point in our history, a recent writer has said: "At this time, outside of the mission, there was no society in Oregon. Those who made any pretension to a life above that of the savages were mostly Canadian French, who, by long residence among the Indians, had become in habit and life very much like those they had so long associated with. They lived in the camp and on the trail, and the one had been a scene of barbarity, and the other of carousal. They were living in a sort of concubinage with Indian women, whom they took to their homes or cast away at pleasure. It is difficult to depict to those who have never seen this character of life, its utter degradation of thought, feeling and action."

This is somewhat an overstatement. There were, as shown in the preceding volume, homes in Oregon; and it is likely that Gervais, Labonte, Solomon Smith and the other settlers of French Prairie, as well as McLoughlin and the other factors or gentlemen at Fort Vancouver, were as faithful to their homes and families as the average of American husbands. Yet without question these first homes and marriages approximated more nearly to savage, or nomadic life, in the hunter stage of man's development, than to the home as we now recognize it. Among the French settlers marriage was not a public or religious rite, but was chiefly on the Indian principle of purchase—the father, or tribe, being satisfied with presents, and whatever the white man's feelings toward the woman, she herself carried the feeling that she was his property. Among many of the whites, no doubt, who had thus acquired wives by purchase, as among Indians, the wife was again sold. At Fort Vancouver the Indian wives were not recognized as equals, and were rather hostages of their tribes than wives in the American understanding. They were not recognized to meet socially, and were not allowed places at the table. They had their own quarters with their children, where they carried on their own housework, eating their meals alone, and spending the most of their time in working fancy articles of native skill for their own decoration.

From such a beginning it would have been very long indeed by any process of development to bring

the embryo Oregon community up to the point of civilization attained among the Americans. In fact, it is probable, that if left alone, and after McLoughlin's death, without the direct influence of Americans, this community would have approximated more to the native standard. Many of the half-breeds would have preferred to join the nomadic Indians and spend their lives in gathering furs than in settled life and cultivating the ground. McLoughlin to a degree represented the head of a family, as also a judge of justice and arbitration of friendship between man and man; but was so overburdened with the cares of a great business, whose success depended rather upon discouraging than encouraging settlement, that his settlement was more nearly a wild plant than an offshoot of civilization.

With the coming of the Lees, with Edwards and Walker, and of Whitman and Spalding, with their wives, and Gray, a new element of civilizing motives, if not absolutely new in kind, yet so much greater in degree as to make an epoch, had appeared in Oregon. These were in strict accord with social evolution, though working with the energy of a high civil prepotency of the American life of which they were as seed; and not waiting for the slow growth of a primitive development. In less than ten years was accomplished what had been but most feebly begun in the preceding forty; and Oregon was full-born as a community and commonwealth in a time which was but a hundredth, or perhaps a thousandth, part re-

quired for the development of States in the primitive ages.

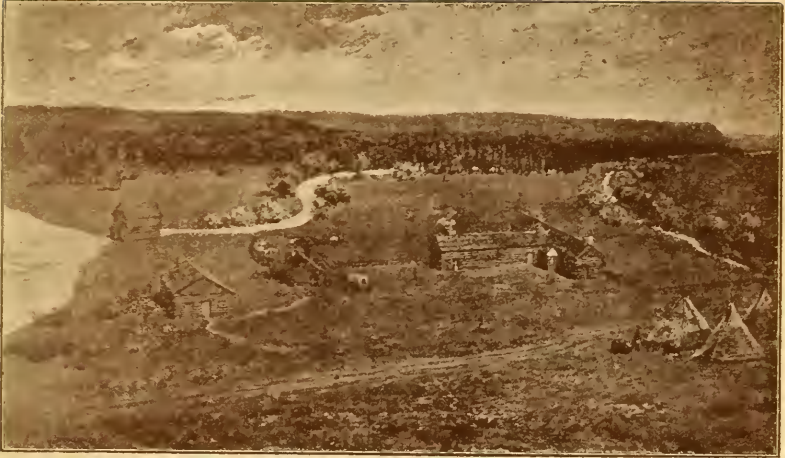
In short, now that religious and family life was started there were reasons for permanent occupation. As long as the Indians lasted, Lee and Whitman would have reasons for remaining and making permanent homes. Even more, so long as they had such permanent stations the various wandering white men with Indian families would gather about them as a center. This was indicated even at the rendezvous in the Rocky Mountains, when Whitman and his party stopped to meet the Nez Perces. Gray mentions particularly six mountain men who made calls and told the missionaries of their families of half-native children, and concluded that when the missionaries got their homes and schools started they would come and live near them. Missions thus started for the benefit of the Indians would therefore necessarily be extended to meet the wants of the white and half-native population. Here, therefore, there was a working factor entirely independent of the fur business, to the level and interests of which all else had hitherto been reduced, and which could not be controlled by commercial motives.

But besides this there were now men in the country not financially dependent upon the British monopoly, who had at heart moral and religious and civil improvement, who would be seeking further aid, and striving to reach the best conditions for carrying on their work. They were Americans, and had

the prejudice, at least, that such work as they desired to accomplish would be best done under American influences. They would be likely to examine and endeavor to assert their rights under treaty relations as Americans; and seek to get reënforcements of Americans. Here therefore there was a principle of growth which had almost unlimited force back of it. If the missionaries thus located at the call of the Indians should become pioneers of American immigration to Oregon, and should develop active and able men along this line, there was already on the eastern side of the continent an eager population, ready to break over the barriers of the Rocky Mountains.

The activity of Jason Lee, and also of Dr. Whitman, followed precisely this bent.

American institutions began to strike root in Oregon. Shepard maintained a successful school at Chemayway, of about forty pupils, half natives and Indians. This was interrupted and almost broken up by an epidemic, something like the fatal scourge originating on Sauvie's Island in 1829; and owing apparently to the same cause—the breaking of the ground and opening up an immense drift rick on the banks of the river. Daniel Lee was taken sick and went to the Sandwich Islands to recover. A number of the pupils died. One promising boy, Kenoteesh, was of the number; and Indian ideas are illustrated that his brother entered the mission school armed with the full intention of killing Shepard;



HOME OF DR. MARCUS WHITMAN AT WAILATPU AND  
SCENE OF THE MASSACRE





but being dissuaded by a friendly Indian he went in a rage to an unarmed band of natives and savagely butchered a number. A Cayuse Indian, by the name of We-lap-tu-lekt, was so impressed with the advantage of a school for his children that he moved his family to Chemaway, and had the satisfaction of seeing his children rapidly improving. But they were attacked with the fever and two died; when, with the other still sick, he fled in terror. The child died on the way, and with its body wrapped in a blanket he hastened on home, sounding the death wail. The idea was thus circulated among all the tribes that the Americans were everywhere "bad medicine." Notwithstanding these discouragements Lee gave an encouraging account of the work, and in July, 1836, a reënforcement from the East, of eight persons, sent by water, arrived in May, 1837. These were Dr. Elijah White, physician, and wife; Alanson Beers and wife, Miss Anna Maria Pittman, Miss Susan Downing, and Miss Elvira Johnson. In September of the same year there was another reënforcement, of Rev. David Leslie and wife, Rev. H. K. W. Perkins and Miss Margaret Smith. In the following winter Jason Lee made an exploring tour to the Umpqua, with the idea of extending the mission to the Southern Oregon Indians. In March of the next year, 1838, he established a mission at the Dalles, stationing there Daniel Lee, now returned, and Mr. Perkins. In July of 1837, Cyrus Shepard and Miss Downing were married, as planned before Shepard

came to Oregon. At the same time Jason Lee and Miss Pittman, somewhat to the surprise of all, were also married.

Mention has already been made of Ewing Young, who came with Hall J. Kelley, and had settled in the picturesque grassy valley of the Chehalem Creek, which enters the Willamette but a short distance below French Prairie, though on the opposite side. He had remained here in defiance of the interdiction upon him of the Hudson's Bay Company, but was regarded as rather an outcast of society. By the missionaries, who did not wish to incur the displeasure of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was little noticed, and was, in fact, perhaps so proud in his bearing as to place them at a distance. Lee had visited Kelley more or less while he was at Vancouver, but evidently did not think it wise to be identified with his movements. With Young was now associated Carmichael, one of the California party; and having obtained some of Wyeth's old vats from Sauvie's Island, proposed to distill liquor, for which the old trappers and mountain men, as well as the Indians, had an appetite. When the project of distilling became known Lee took immediate steps to have it discontinued, and the manner in which he did so was very admirable. He wrote Young a note, calling his attention to the unlawful and highly dangerous nature of his project; that neither life nor property would be safe if the Indians were led to intoxication, and proposed to pay him in full for his outfit if he

would give up the business. To this Young replied with equal frankness that he contemplated distilling only because all other sorts of business had been closed to him; he could neither buy nor sell at the only market in the territory; but if distilling was regarded as objectionable he would relinquish the business; and, illustrating his native pride, would do this without reimbursement.

By this letter Lee was undoubtedly much impressed with Young as a strong and probably useful man to the community. Finding that he was willing to sacrifice a bad business he began to think how he might interest him in a good one. There was already manifest a need of cattle owned by the settlers. As has been noticed in the last volume, McLoughlin was the pioneer of the cattle industry in Oregon, and he had lent cattle to the settlers, including the missionaries. But it seemed to Lee, and especially to the Americans in the country, that this was an oppressive, or at least repressive, arrangement, and they wanted cattle of their own. Lee therefore conferred with Young about getting cattle from California. He was the only man, as stated by Gray, upon whom Lee felt that he could rely to carry through so great an enterprise. Young was willing to go if Lee would secure the funds. This the missionary did. As stated by Gray, he found from the books of the company who of the settlers had credit at Fort Vancouver, and going personally to McLoughlin requested, and even insisted, that amounts

for the purpose of the cattle company be forwarded on their orders. This was a very bold move, and there is reason to believe what has been asserted, that it was opposed indirectly by the Hudson's Bay Company at the outset.

Great assistance was received at this point from Captain William A. Slacum, who had been sent as special agent by the United States Government, to examine the Oregon country and report to Washington. He had come to the Sandwich Islands and had there hired the brig "Loriot," and proceeded to the Willamette. Of his object Dr. McLoughlin does not speak very highly, and regarded him as little better than a spy, saying: "In the fall (of 1836) Mr. Slacum came in a vessel from Oahu, which he hired for that purpose. On arriving he pretended that he was a private gentleman, and that he came to meet Messrs. Murray and their companions, who had left the States to visit the country. But this did not deceive me, as I perceived who he was, and his object, and by the report of his mission, published in the proceedings of the Congress of the United States, I found my surmises were correct."

Slacum visited almost every house in the Willamette Valley and took an account of the numbers of the inhabitants and productions, and upon learning of the cattle company offered free passage to California on the "Loriot." It is said by Gray that he advanced all the money the mission wished on their stock, taking mission drafts on their board; besides

giving free passage. By Hines it is said that the mission and McLoughlin furnished practically all the money required in the enterprise; the settlers contributing chiefly their services in driving the stock. The statements of McLoughlin are of much interest on this point. He says in his account to the London people: "This year (1836) the people of the Willamette Valley formed a party, and went by sea with Mr. Slacum to California for cattle, and returned in 1837 with 250 head."

In the document published by the Oregon Pioneer Association, he gives a more particular account, saying: "In 1836 we found the means of forming a company to go to California for cattle. I took half the stock for the Hudson's Bay Company, so that by purchasing a larger number (as the expense of driving 500 or 1,000 was the same) it would make the cattle cheaper. Those of the settlers that had means put it in the stock; those that had none engaged as drivers at one dollar a day, to be paid in cattle at actual cost. Mr. Slacum, who came here in a chartered vessel, gave them a gratis passage from this place to San Francisco. Mr. Ewing Young was selected to conduct the party. Mr. P. L. Edwards, who came with Messrs. Lee, of the Methodist mission, but now a lawyer of California, was appointed treasurer. They bought, I think, about seven hundred head of cattle, which cost eight dollars per head rendered. In the Willamette the settlers kept the tame and broken-in oxen they had belonging to the Hudson's



Bay Company, and gave their California wild cattle in the place; so they found themselves stocked with tame cattle that cost but eight dollars per head; and the Hudson's Bay Company, to favor the settlers, took calves in place of the grown up cattle, because the Hudson's Bay Company wanted them for beef. These calves would grow up before they were required."

This undoubtedly represents McLoughlin in the true light; all his feelings were with the settlers, and once being convinced that their project was to go through, he aided them, and made the company a party in obtaining the beef animals that were needed for supplying ships. He mentions also rather drily how the settlers got the best of the bargain by returning wild California animals and calves for the well-broken oxen that he lent them; but this was clearly by his own connivance, and only one of the shrewd ways in which he managed to beat his company, and even himself. The big steers and growing calves were better for beef than the tough old oxen—so he reasoned.

There is another interesting point here. McLoughlin was willing to take stock in a company headed by Ewing Young—whom he had once refused admittance at his fort door. This indicates both that he was convinced that the charges against Young were untrue, and that he was willing to be reconciled to and trust him. Edwards was added, to quiet any lurking suspicion of Young; which shows that

Young also was willing to accept a reasonable amount of oversight without taking offense. Mrs. Victor, giving a summary of this effort of the embryo community to stock itself with the means of independent industry, says of Young: "It is doubtful if the cattle expedition would have been a success under any other man in Oregon. The financial agent and Secretary was Philip L. Edwards, of the mission, who, in the diary kept on his journey, continually complained and lamented over the hardships encountered. In the struggle with wild cattle, wild men, and wild mountain travel, Edwards was often ready to faint. On one occasion, when 'Alp on Alp' seemed to close the way before them, it is recorded in Edwards' diary that Young said to him: 'Now, if you are a philosopher, show yourself one.' But poor Edwards was fain to leave philosophizing to the mountain men whom custom had hardened to their irritating tasks. The pen of the historian can hardly honor adequately the part played in the commonwealth-building by this class of men. In every great emergency they accepted the post of danger or the heavy burden. They neither shrank from peril nor asked rewards."

The other members of the company, besides Young and Edwards, are given as W. J. Bailey, Webley Hauxhurst, James O'Neil, Lawrence Carmichael, Calvin Tibbitts, John Turner, George Gay, and two Canadians, De Puis and Ergnotte. The stock subscribed is stated by Mrs. Victor as \$2,500; \$500 be-

ing subscribed by Jason Lee, which was advanced by Slacum; \$900 by McLoughlin, and \$1,100 by the settlers. But adds that Daniel Lee gives the amount as \$2,880.

That American sentiment was developing rapidly, and perhaps prematurely, is shown by a memorial prepared and sent by Jason Lee, but little more than a year after the cattle company was organized. After a residence of three years in Oregon, Lee had so far studied the situation as to conclude that he had no longer one, but two missions, in this territory. The first was still to the Indians; and that should be performed by means of stations planted in their tribes as they receded. The other was to the settlements of whites and half natives, and this should be performed by strengthening the central mission. To carry out the policy that he now saw necessary, would require still larger force, quite a portion of which must be lay members and settlers. He saw, too, that the restrictions under which the missionaries and the few American settlers then in the country, were held, in common with the French Canadians, would not be borne by American residents. The cattle monopoly had been broken, but the trade monopoly remained just the same. There was no market except such as the Hudson's Bay people afforded; prices were on an artificial, or prescribed, rather than a natural basis; there was no money, except Hudson's Bay paper and accounts at their store; and there was no law or execution of justice, except

under the Canadian statutes, as administered by the Hudson's Bay justices of the peace; nor any way of obtaining any redress of grievances that might arise with the company, or its agents. Under this condition the few Americans already in the country felt restless, and unless at least an equal American jurisdiction with the Canadian, and American enterprise and American credits and money be allowed in the country, there was little hope of inducing Americans to come and man his mission stations.

Pondering over these conditions, and advising with his associates, he at length decided that he should return East and secure a large reënforcement; and also exert what influence he could to gain some sort of American jurisdiction in that part of Oregon which the United States should claim as hers. A memorial was prepared along the lines above indicated and was placed in his hands. It was the work of Jason Lee and P. L. Edwards; "doubtless assisted," as remarked by Hines, "by Leslie."

This memorial began by speaking of themselves as "settlers of the Columbia River"; representing that the "settlement begun in 1832" had prospered beyond expectation; and that the soil, climate, and general resources of the territory were such as to invite and support a large population; there was much more arable land than had usually been represented; facilities for trade across the ocean to China and India, and the Pacific Islands, gave promise of a rich commerce: coffee and sugar growing in the Sand-

wich Islands would soon create a demand for the products of Oregon, such as beef and flour. These, they believed, afforded strong reasons "for the Government of the United States to take formal and speedy possession." The need of such assumption of authority they conceived to be chiefly because their present relations with the Hudson's Bay Company could not indefinitely continue. "Our social intercourse has thus far been prosecuted," they said, "with reference to the feelings of dependence on the Hudson's Bay Company, and to their moral influence. Under this state of things we have thus far prospered, but we cannot hope that it will continue." The reason was, that as population increased supplies would be drawn from other sources. The population would not be dependent upon the company, and would not respect its authority to enforce good order and public peace. They alluded to Oregon as the country of their adoption, and its future interests were identical with their own. They conceived that they were "the germ of a great State"; and that upon the character of the immigration which was sure to come depended their own future welfare and that of their posterity. "The natural resources of the country, with a well judged civil code, will invite a good community; but a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection of life or property." They desired to encourage the hardy and enterprising pioneer of the West, rather than the unprincipled adventurer from



LEWIS FIELD LINN





Botany Bay, or Polynesia, or South America, to make Oregon a home. Without an American authority in the land, they argued further, good relations with the Indians could not continue. Whenever a division between the American settlers and the Hudson's Bay Company should occur, the Indians, who depended for trade upon the Hudson's Bay people, would become ill-affected toward the Americans. They concluded:

“ We do not presume to suggest the manner in which the country should be occupied by the Government, nor the extent to which our settlement should be encouraged. We confide in the wisdom of our national legislators, and leave the subject to their candid deliberation; and your petitioners will ever pray.”

This was signed by every male member of the Willamette mission, ten in number; by seventeen American residents of the valley; and by nine Canadians; making thirty-six in all. This was couched in terms of great caution and not calculated to give offense even to the Hudson's Bay people; but was still unmistakable in its significance that they intended to make here an American community. This was taken east and presented to Linn, of Missouri, January 28, 1839.

Before measures could be consummated it was necessary to give notice of the withdrawal of joint occupancy; and as this could not be done without executive as well as congressional action, Linn's meas-

ure amounted to no more than an agitation; but as such served a most useful purpose. If it were his intention, or if he had succeeded in forcing his government bill to a conclusion, and had then fixed the extent of American jurisdiction, it would have inevitably made the line that of the Columbia River. Great Britain would then have yielded nothing further, and the United States would have contended for nothing more.

But besides this memorial Jason Lee succeeded in interesting many of the frontier people, whom he wished to make Oregon pioneers, in this country, and at least one party was organized at once. Proceeding also to the East and to Washington he secured a large reënforcement—known in mission annals as “the great reënforcement.” While ostensibly and so far as spirit and intent of the missionaries were concerned, it was a missionary enterprise, it was secretly encouraged and aided by the United States Government; an appropriation of \$5,000 for furthering the colony being made from the secret service fund. This would indicate that the friends of Oregon at the capital did not believe that the time was ripe for forcing the question in public, but rather sought to encourage American settlement until there was enough American force on the ground to determine the limits of American occupation and rightful authority.

A short communication to Caleb Cushing, in response to an inquiry, shows the line of thought urged

by Lee, and proved a practical line of operation. He said: "It is believed that if the United States Government of the United States takes such measures in respect to this territory as will secure the rights of the settlers, most of those who are now attached to the mission will remain as permanent settlers in the country after the mission may no longer need their services. Hence it may be safely assumed that ours, in connection with the other settlers already there, is the commencement of a permanent settlement of the country. In view of this it will be readily seen that we need two things at the hands of the government for our protection and prosperity.

"First, we need a guaranty from our government that the possession of the land we take up, and the improvements we make upon it, will be assured to us. These settlements will greatly increase the value of the government domain in that country, should the Indian title ever be extinguished. And we cannot but expect therefore that those who have been pioneers in this arduous work will be liberally dealt with in this matter.

"Secondly, we need the authority and protection of the government and laws of the United States to regulate the intercourse of the settlers with each other, protect them against the aggressions and peculations of the Indians, and to protect the Indians against the aggressions of the white settlers.

"To secure these objects it is not supposed that much of a military force will be necessary. If a suit-

able person should be sent out as a magistrate and governor of the territory, the settlers would sustain his authority. . . .

“ You are aware, Sir, that there is no law in that country to protect or control American citizens. And to whom shall we look, to whom can we look, for the establishment of wholesome laws to regulate our infant, but rising, settlements, but to the Congress of our own beloved country? The country will be settled, and that speedily, from some quarter; and it depends very much upon the speedy action of Congress what that population shall be, and what shall be the fate of the Indian tribes in that territory. It may be thought that Oregon is of little importance; but, rely upon it, there is the germ of a great State. We are resolved to do what we can to benefit the country, but we throw ourselves upon you for protection.”

The Cushings, of Newburyport, Mass., were already interested in commerce to Oregon, the brig “ Maryland ” being fitted out in 1839, succeeding Jason Lee’s letter of January 16th, of that year, and was despatched under Captain John H. Couch.

Accompanying Lee were two Indian youths, who attracted much attention and did much to heighten interest at the many missionary meetings held in the Methodist churches at New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore; and at other points. Never before had the cause of Oregon, now presented in both its missionary and its political needs, had so

wide a hearing. With Lee, also, the three sons of Thomas McKay were conducted and placed in school at Wilbraham, where Lee had been educated.

The party assembled for the increased missionary force in Oregon numbered, all told, 51; the voyage was by the bark "Lausanne," under Captain Spalding. The company were the following: Jason Lee and wife; Rev. J. H. Frost, wife and one child, New York; Rev. Gustavus Hines, wife and child, Genesee; Rev. Alvin Waller, wife and two children, Genesee; Rev. W. H. Kone and wife, North Carolina; Rev. J. P. Richmond, M.D., wife and four children, Illinois; Ira L. Babcock, M.D., wife and one child, New York; George Abernethy, wife and two children, steward, New York; W. W. Raymond, and wife, farmer, New York; H. B. Brewer, and wife, farmer; L. H. Judson, wife and three children, cabinetmaker; J. L. Parrish, wife and three children, blacksmith; James Olley, and wife, carpenter; Hamilton Campbell, wife and child, carpenter; Miss C. A. Clark, teacher; Miss Maria T. Ware, teacher; Miss Almira Phillips, teacher; Elmira Phelps, teacher; Miss Orpha Lankton, stewardess; and Thomas Adams, Indian boy. (One of the Indian boys died in New York.)

The "Lausanne" sailed from New York, October 9, 1839; and entered the Columbia May 21, 1840.

June 13th, of the same year, the work among the natives was laid out upon a broad scale, and three new stations were located, being at Clatsop, at Nis-



qually and on the Umpqua. The members were assigned as follows to their work: Jason Lee, superintendent; J. P. Richmond, Nisqually; J. H. Frost, Clatsop; Gustavus Hines and W. H. Kone, Umpqua; Daniel Lee and H. K. W. Perkins, the Dalles; David Leslie, Willamette; Alvin F. Waller, Willamette Falls; W. H. Willson, Nisqually; H. B. Brewer, the Dalles; Dr. Babcock, the Dalles; Dr. Elijah White, and the others, farmers or mechanics, were assigned to the Old Mission, where requirements of business also placed George Abernethy and Miss Lankton.

Mention has already been made of a lecture given by Jason Lee, at Peoria, Ill.; and that as a result a company was organized here to go to Oregon and raise the American flag. This, as the first band of Americans to start from the East for this territory for the single purpose of settlement and occupation, is of unusual interest. At a time when every man counted as a host, and at the final scratch the Americans were found to have none to spare, the results of what seemed at the time as little more than a dare-devil adventure of rather wild young men, proved of utmost advantage. To this party belonged Robert Shortess, Joseph Holman, Sidney W. Smith, Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher and R. L. Kilbourne. Following is a condensed account from an unusually interesting sketch by Robert Shortess, one of the party: "This company was organized at Peoria, Ill., early in 1839, and started on its western journey

about the first of May. It consisted of nineteen persons. Not one of these persons had ever been further west than St. Louis, or knew anything of the hardships and dangers of the expedition in which they were engaged. They were led by T. J. Farnham. . . . Their leader dubbed them 'Oregon Dragoons,' and they carried a flag, presented by Mrs. Farnham, bearing the motto, 'Oregon or the Grave.' It should be mentioned that the first impulse to this immigrant movement was given by a lecture delivered by Rev. Jason Lee, in the autumn of 1838. Soon after the writer met with the captain of the 'Oregon Dragoons,' at Independence, Mo., he was informed that it was the intention to raise the standard and take possession in the name of the United States and drive out the Hudson's Bay Company; and being asked if he considered his force, nineteen men, sufficient, he replied, 'Oh, yes; plenty.' 'But, captain, part of your force are Englishmen; do you think they will fight against their countrymen?' 'Oh, yes; they will not turn traitors; if they do, by —, we'll shoot 'em.'

"The Santa Fé road was preferred to the usual, or Platte road, by the advice of A. Sublette and Phil. Thompson, who arrived from the Rocky Mountains." After a considerable number of adventures and some serious quarreling, and the desertion of a part, and falling in with a Santa Fé wagon train, which at first mistook the dragoons for a band of Comanches, they reached Bent's Fort. The narrative proceeds:

“ We remained at Bent’s Fort about one week, during which time a division of the party was effected, and a division of the property held in common. Three—T. J. Farnham, Sidney Smith and O. A. Oakley—were distributed to themselves, and W. Blair and Joseph Wood chose to go with them. They went under the guidance of a trapper named Kelly, following the Arkansas. The rest of us, now reduced to eight, followed the same river about sixty miles, thence north to South Platte, which we reached at the spot where Denver now stands; thence down the river to St. Vrain’s Fort, where we halted to await the arrival of a party bound for a trading post on Green River. Here we were detained six weeks. . . . At length the expected party arrived, and we renewed our journey, following the Cache la Pouch, crossing the Black Hills to Laramie, up the same nearly to its source, thence to North Platte; thence across the divide separating the waters of the Atlantic from the Pacific. We struck a small stream known as St. Vrain’s Fork, down which we journeyed to its junction with Little Bear River, an affluent of Green River, traveling some distance down Bear River; thence over a barren desert, and entered Brown’s Hole, a fertile and pleasant valley on Green River. . . . In Brown’s Hole we stopped at Fort Crockett, a trading post owned by Thomas Craig and St. Clair, where were several traders and trappers, among whom were Dr. Robert Newell and Joseph L. Meek, who have since become pretty well

known in Oregon and Washington. . . . Newell and Meek being about to start for Fort Hall to sell their furs and lay in a supply of goods for winter trade, the writer was invited to accompany them. As soon as the snow melted on the low ground [an early snow fall having occurred], we started on our journey, having about three days' provisions of dried meat. Two hunters, Craig and Mitchell, went ahead, promising to bring in a supply of meat to our camp in the evening, but returned empty-handed, took supper and remained with us until morning, shared our scanty breakfast, and left to return no more. We then proceeded on our way up Green River, over mountains covered with snow, to the mouth of Henry's Fork. During the day we killed a wolf, which was taken along as a final resort against starvation. . . . Continued our journey to Bear River, down the same to Soda Springs; from thence north to Port Neuf and Snake River, and arrived at Fort Hall on the evening of the eleventh day from leaving Fort Crockett; and were hospitably received by F. Ermatinger. . . . After a few days' rest and refreshment Newell and Meek, having purchased their supplies, set out on their return to Green River. The writer was now left entirely alone as to American society, exposed to the injustice of the much-abused Hudson's Bay Company; but, owing perhaps to the dullness of his apprehension, is not aware that any person connected with them attempted to take any undue advantage of the situation; but, on the con-

trary, were friendly and hospitable, and disposed to assist him in prosecuting his journey—Mr. Ermatinger especially so. Nearly all the men were gone on the headwaters of the Missouri on a buffalo hunt; consequently times were dull, and the prospect of my proceeding on my journey was not favorable, as the expedition to Vancouver would not be ready in less than a month. However, Mr. Ermatinger agreed to send what fur he had in charge of a Canadian named Sylvert and myself, assisted by two natives. I gladly availed myself of the offer, and we set out on our journey of 500 miles to Walla Walla. Winter had set in, and the prospect was anything but cheering. . . . At length we descended to the Umatilla, where we found a mild spring temperature and the earth covered with an abundance of grass, green as in May.” . . . Here [at Fort Walla Walla], which they reached the tenth day from Boise, the writer being informed that it was too late in the season to cross the Cascade Mountains, went to Dr. Whitman’s mission, where he continued to work till spring. . . . “ He (Whitman) had been successful to a considerable extent in inducing the Indians to cultivate the soil and adopt the habits of civilization; and would no doubt have continued successful if his benevolent, self-sacrificing labors had not been thwarted — . . . The few natives with whom I became acquainted during my residence at Waiilatpu, the name of the station, I found quite amenable to moral suasion when supported by a dis-



REV. GUSTAVUS HINES

A Pioneer Methodist Missionary of 1840.





position to use coercion as a last resort. In this they only manifest that they are human.

“ I remained at the station until the 12th of March, 1840, when I left for the Willamette. I set out solitary and alone, and continued so until I arrived at the Indian village below Walla Walla, when I overtook an Indian chief of the Deschutes village, with whom I traveled to the Dalles. The weather was windy and cold and the air darkened by the drifting sand, and on the day of arrival at the Deschutes it snowed during the most of the day and became bitter cold in the evening. The weather continuing cold and stormy, I remained at the Indian village during the next day and was hospitably treated by the chief and his people. . . . On the second morning, the sun shining clear and bright, I set forward for the mission, 15 miles distant, escorted by the chief and four or five of his people. I arrived about noon, and met a kind reception from Rev. H. K. W. Perkins, in charge. I also found at the mission a Mr. Ben. Wright, from Texas, and a young man by the name of Dutton, both of whom had crossed the plains the year previous.” . . . With Wright and Dutton the journey was resumed, and after a hard scramble in the early part of the season through the Cascade Mountains and the forests of the Clackamas, they reached French Prairie about the middle of April, stopping at the house of Calvin Tibbitts and C. J. Hubbard, settlers from Wyeth’s party. Shortess continues :

“ The writer spent a few days with the settlers, whom he found enjoying the comfort of plenty, and apparently content with their situation. It was the middle of April; the fields of wheat promised an abundance of the staff of life; the prairies were covered with rich pasture, surrounded by groves of timber, and dotted over by herds of cattle and horses, cropping the rich food so bountifully provided for them. The ranges of mountains in the distance, with the snowy peaks seeming to pierce the clouds, altogether formed a prospect of beauty and sublimity never to be forgotten. ‘ And,’ I said, ‘ if there’s peace to be found in the world a heart that is humble might hope for it here.’ I arrived at the mission on the 18th of April, 1840. It being Saturday, I remained at the mission until Monday. I then went to work for A. O’Neil, for whom I continued to labor until the latter end of June, when, having finished his work, I went to work at the mission. The wages for farm work were one dollar a day and board. The settlement at that time extended from the Butte [Butteville] to the Methodist mission, about ten miles. There were then remaining in the country six men, who came here in the employ of the American Fur Company in 1812; viz.: William Cannon, an American; Joseph Gervais, Etienne Lucier, Antoine Revoir, Michel La Framboise and Labonte, Canadian Frenchmen, all thriving, well-to-do farmers.”

This narrative of Shortess has very high value; it

is not known at precisely what time it was written, but "many years" before its publication in 1896;\* from allusions, however, we should judge subsequently to the publication of Gray's history in 1870; or about thirty years after the events. It shows for one thing the character of men who were first attracted to Oregon; Shortess being well educated, a student of Latin and English classics, and, as seen above a perspicacious writer. It illustrates also the general kindness of the Indians, at whom, however, he does not forbear to cast rather slighting reflections, after the style of the all-sufficient and frequently unjustly egotistical western wanderer. It shows particularly, however, that wherever there was a mission station thither the weary and weather-buffed traveler headed, and found comfort and welcome; Whitman's, Perkins' and the "Mission," being not only cities of refuge, but places where men might find work. This class of men, like Shortess himself, did not forbear to drop slighting remarks about the missionaries and their work; or, unlike Shortess, often broke in rudely upon their services, or showed their disregard for the Sabbath; or, still worse, sought to corrupt the Indians for whom the missionaries were laboring; yet, in their better feelings, respected their endeavors and gave them a hearty, though often rudely expressed, support. It was, however, well that into the fibers of the young commonwealth all sorts of material should go; not

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\*Wm. M. Chance says about a year before Shortess' death.

one man that arrived, apparently, coming amiss in the work that was to be done.

As to the residue of the party, which had divided in the Rocky Mountains, some went to New Mexico, but the majority crossed the divide from the Arkansas to the South Platte and waited six weeks for a guide. One, Charles Gates, left for New Mexico; Robert Moore went into winter quarters at St. Vrain's Fort. Oakley and Woods met here a man named Richardson, who had guided Rev. J. S. Griffin and Asahel Munger, and their wives, a party of missionaries, to Fort Hall; but by him were so discouraged by unfavorable reports of the Willamette Valley, as to return east with him. Farnham, the leader, kept two men, Smith and Blair, as far as Walla Walla, but finally quarreled with Smith, and the already divided "Dragoons" were still further subdivided. Blair struck out for the Lapwai mission on the Clearwater, finding employment in Spalding's mill, but afterward came to the Willamette, and went to California. Smith came on alone, reaching the mission in a state of semi-starvation and nudity, and made such a singular impression upon the inmates that he took offense at the somewhat dubious treatment accorded, and went soon to the Chehalem Valley, where he lived with Ewing Young until the latter's death the next year. He acquired much property in horses and cattle, and became one of the "stalwarts" among the independent Americans. He was a man of large words, and somewhat vehem-

ent manner, which earned for him, as one of the humorous sobriquets bestowed by their friends upon the pioneers of that day, a grotesque cognomen. His many truly sterling qualities, however, made him eventually a wealthy man, and the founder of one of the leading families of Oregon.

As to Farnham, he also reached the Willamette, and spent some time at the mission, and also at Vancouver; "but instead of raising the American flag," says Shortess, "and turning the Hudson's Bay Company out-of-doors, accepted the gift of a suit of clothes and a passage to the Sandwich Islands, and took a final leave of Oregon." Nevertheless, although his company of Oregon Dragoons ultimated in rather a farce, as Shortess treats it, Farnham served Oregon in his generation, and according to his ability; getting up on his return a "Pictorial History" of California and Oregon; serving thus to cast a romantic interest over the territory, and still further educating the western people in the country just over the divide.

Four more of the band, Francis Fletcher, Joseph Holman, Ralph L. Kilbourne and Amos Cook, also came through to Oregon. They left their winter quarters in February, being tempted forth by the mild weather, but were soon caught in a Rocky Mountain snow storm, and required forty days to reach Fort Hall—the usual time being ten days. It was not until summer that they reached Vancouver, and there they had so youthful an appearance that



McLoughlin was almost disposed to send them home for runaway boys. But those American boys, hardened by summer and winter in the mountains, soon showed that they were men. They became among the most resolute and energetic of pioneers, and their names are most worthily perpetuated in their descendants. They went on in June to the mission, and soon found homes of their own; Fletcher and Cook taking places at the fords of the Yamhill, between what are now the towns of La Fayette and Dayton.

As showing the literary vein of Shortess, and also his somewhat misanthropic disposition, he closes his sketch, after alluding to the "great reinforcement, and the hopes excited thereby," for great moral improvement in the territory, and failure to realize all that was expected, with the well-known stanza:

"Poor race of men," said the pitying spirit,  
"Dearly ye pay for your primal fall;  
Some flowers of Eden ye still may inherit,  
But the trail of the serpent is over them all."

## CHAPTER VI

### AMERICAN ARRIVALS, PERIOD OF ENTERPRISE AND PLANS FOR IMMIGRATION



HAVING in the previous chapter given somewhat particular attention to the efforts of Americans connected with the Methodist mission and those induced to come to Oregon through their efforts, it will be necessary in this chapter to trace the enterprises of the miscellaneous Americans, who had arrived partly by accident and partly by attraction, but once here were disposed to start enterprises of their own. In order to follow all the influences that were at first very slowly but surely operating to transform Oregon from a hunting to an industrial state of society, and from the British to the American type, we should insert here a catalogue of American vessels that still arrived as mere ventures. This will take us back a few years.

In March, of 1829, arrived the schooner "Convoy," from Boston, under Captain Thompson. She entered the Columbia River at the same time as the Hudson's Bay vessel "William and Anne," which was wrecked on the bar. The "Convoy," following the ship, observed the catastrophe, and avoided the sands, reaching the harbor in safety; sending also a boat to the rescue of the crew of the lost craft, but unable to save them. She proceeded to Vancouver and was of assistance in bringing the Clatsop Indians to terms. From this American schooner there remained one to become a citizen of Oregon; this was Felix Hathaway, who made a home near the mouth of the Chehalem in the Willamette Valley.

About the same time the ship "Owyhee" was fitted out by a Boston firm, Bryant and Sturges, under Captain Dominis, and arrived at the Columbia in April, of 1829. An interesting item in this connection is the manner in which Dominis made a safe entrance. He spent two weeks in taking soundings and buoying out the channel. The buoys were simply sticks of stove wood, anchored by means of spun yarn, and weighted sufficiently to be held in place. He made the entrance, hitherto unknown to him, in perfect safety, and moved up the Columbia as far as Deer Island. This suggests that if Astor had placed his ship "Tonquin" in the hands of a man as intelligent and resourceful as Dominis, he might not have lost his vessel. The same care would have brought the "Tonquin" through without loss of life on the Columbia bar.

The object of the "Owyhee" was to take salmon, of which in two seasons fifty hogsheads were secured, salted, and sold in Boston for ten cents a pound—certainly a very slight return on the venture. It can scarcely be doubted that Dominis was not well liked on the Columbia. It is said that the Indians tore up his fish traps, and that they attributed the malady that broke out on the island near his ship to "bad medicine," thrown by him into the water. He was treated kindly as a man by the Hudson's Bay Company, but certainly not forwarded by them in his business. Upon the "Owyhee" was a man then young, Francis A. Lamont, of Bath, Me.

In return for a kindly turn and present of a quarter of beef to the ship, Lamont was glad to give McLoughlin some peach pits saved at the Chilean Island, Juan Fernandez; and from these, carefully planted, came the first peach trees in Oregon.

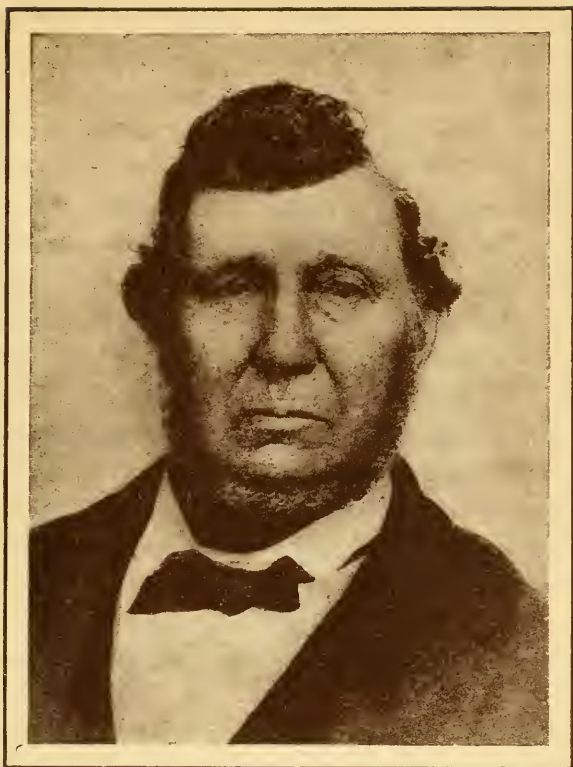
The "Sultana," the next vessel to be fitted out for the Columbia, had been a Smyrna packet, and was owned by Joseph Baker & Sons, of Boston. She was under charter of Captain Wyeth, and in command of James Lambert, master. She did not, however, reach the Columbia, being wrecked on a reef of the Society Islands. From the situation into which they were cast the captain and his crew extricated themselves after almost incredible sufferings. Lamont was also upon the "Sultana." Lambert, afterward, was also commander of the "May Dacre." Lamont continued seafaring, his last venture being in the brig "John Davis," with which he came to the Columbia in 1849, stopping at San Francisco and bringing seventy-five passengers to Portland. He then left the sea and settled at St. Helens. Dominis went to the Sandwich Islands, engaging in trade, and finally departed on a cruise in his vessel "Diana," from which he never returned, nor was any trace or report of his fate ever afterward seen or heard. A son married into the royal family of Hawaii.

In 1839 John Cushing, of Newburyport, Mass., became interested in Oregon, and learning from Jason Lee and others of the growing community in Oregon, determined to enter into a general trade with



the settlers, sending a cargo of assorted goods and intending to take in return a cargo of salt salmon—for the salt salmon idea still stuck in the minds of the New England merchants. For this purpose the brig “Maryland” was fitted out, and was placed in command of a young sea captain, John H. Couch. Couch was then an experienced seaman, although but twenty-eight years of age, having been a sailor since the age of fifteen, and in the East India trade, in employ of Bartlett, of Newburyport. He had been married but a few years, his wife being Caroline Flanders, a sister of George H. Flanders. His new employer was the father of the celebrated Caleb Cushing; and thus by trade relations, marriage, and in his own right Couch represented eminent connections. It was his intention to dispose of his general merchandise at the Hawaiians and in Oregon; load salmon on the Columbia, proceed to the islands and sell the salmon, and take on a cargo of whale oil for Massachusetts.

He arrived in June of 1840, off the bar of the Columbia, about a month after the “Lausanne,” already mentioned. Although wholly unacquainted with the bar and the river he made a safe entrance and followed the river until he was compelled to stop—which was not until he reached the Falls of the Willamette. Oregon was astonished to see the apparition of a gallant New England vessel, with canvas spread to the dallying winds, where hitherto only canoes or bateaux had penetrated; but the conditions



**CAPTAIN JOHN H. COUCH**

An Oregon Pioneer of 1840.



were not found favorable for trade. The Oregon people had no money; neither did they, having no recourse except to the Hudson's Bay fort, hardly dare to trade with a chance competitor. Consequently the "Maryland" dropped down the river as the summer freshet receded, and finally put to sea, and became catalogued with the long list of previous American failures on the Columbia. One most important acquisition, however, from the "Maryland"—as almost every ship had to leave at least one settler—was G. W. Le Breton, an active and well educated young American. As his name indicates, he was of French ancestry; and he was a member of the Catholic Church. He occupied a position, therefore, of rare influence, and used it rarely, and would perhaps have reached a place of eminence in the nation as he did in the little Oregon community, had his life not been prematurely cut off by an unwise affray with a band of Molallas.

Couch, however, did not give up for one failure. He went back to Massachusetts, built a bark, the "Chenamus," which he modeled after an Indian canoe, and named for a Chinook chief, giving thus the form, as it is said, upon which the clipper ships, and more recently the ocean greyhounds, have been constructed. With the "Chenamus" he returned in 1844, and engaged in permanent trade.

Two very important government expeditions entered the Columbia River during this period. The first was under Sir Edward Belcher, of the Royal

Navy, on the part of the British admiralty, and surveyed the Pacific Coast from San Francisco Bay to the Columbia, including both harbors, and the lower Columbia to the Willamette and Vancouver. This was in 1839, though the period covered by the expedition was from 1836 to 1842, making the circuit of the globe, and charting many hitherto undetermined points in the Pacific Ocean. It is said that McLoughlin and Sir Edward nearly came to an altercation about the cattle on Sauvie's Island; the Englishman wishing to supply his ships from the young herd, which was dear as the apple of his eye to the doughty doctor, and was defended at all hazards.

The monumental expedition of the times was that of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, afterward admiral. It was ordered out by the United States Government to survey for the use of American mariners the hitherto not well charted shores of both the Southern and Northern Pacific. The work on the Columbia was not probably the primary design, as this department was not first visited; but that the heads of departments were keeping a close watch upon American interests in Oregon, was shown by the inclusion of this in Wilkes' great survey. The exploring squadron consisted of the two sloops of war, "Vincennes" and "Peacock," already memorable in history; the store ship "Relief," the brig "Porpoise" and the schooners "Sea Gull" and "Flying Fish." The squadron sailed from the Chesapeake August 19,

1838. The " Sea Gull " was lost after passing Cape Horn; the course was then toward Australia, and the southern continent was explored and its ice-bound shores charted for nearly 1,800 miles. From this extreme of land, his highest southern latitude being 70 degrees, 10 minutes, and farther south than any reached, except by Cook and Weddell, Wilkes set sail for the Oregon coast, which he reached on April 27, 1841. Fearing to venture at that season across the bar he stood out to sea and made the Straits of Fuca, and entering the sound proceeded as far south as Nisqually, near the point already long occupied as a fort by the British. General surveys of the Oregon country were made from this station: One party went across the Cascade Mountains to Fort Okanogan; another came southward and made a reconnaissance of the Cowlitz Valley and of the Lower Columbia, and as far up as Wallula. Still other parties made surveys of the coast of the Pacific, the Straits of Fuca, Admiralty Inlet, and the Willamette, and even the Sacramento valleys. It is not to be regretted that Puget Sound was made practically the base of this great examination, which was carefully done under a trained and capable corps of officers, who could not but be impressed, and could not have failed to impress others, that Puget Sound and the Straits of Fuca were naturally and necessarily to be included in possession of the Columbia basin, and that without this immense body of water as the supreme gate of the Pacific Coast, either commercial or military oc-



cupation and possession of Oregon would be impossible. The gate of the Cascade Mountains by the valley, or chasm, of the Columbia, as an outlet to the lower waters was not more necessary than possession of the Straits of Fuca as the logical gateway from the lower waters to the Pacific and to the world. "The scientific frontier," which would forever settle the question of boundaries and reduce occupation to its lowest terms, and insure unchangeable relations between nations that sought, on the whole, to be friends, must class the Puget Sound Basin as a part of the Columbia Basin.

The sloop of war "Peacock," under command of Lieutenant William L. Hudson, having been separated and long detained, reached the Columbia in July; missed the channel and was wrecked on the sands now bearing the name of Peacock Spit. The crew, however, and all the papers were landed in safety on Cape Disappointment, where every courtesy was shown by the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company and by the missionaries. Wilkes later entered the Columbia in the "Porpoise"; the "Vincennes" going to California.

Many results of the highest interest came from this expedition. Among others connected with it was Horatio Hale, who became interested in the ethnology of the region, and was perhaps first to make a scientific study of the Indian languages, as mentioned in Volume I. There were also gentlemen well versed in the laws of the country, treaty rights, and

diplomatic relations, with whom some of the Oregonians conversed, getting very valuable suggestions as to procedure in case they attempted to set up a local American Government. Of great help, too, was Wilkes to an infant attempt at shipbuilding, which some of the young men in the Willamette Valley projected.

This leads to one of the most daring efforts and withal perfectly successful of all the striking episodes in Oregon's romantic history. Some among the settlers still wished to get cattle again from California, and thinking over the means they decided to build a schooner, sail it to San Francisco, and selling it, purchase their stock, and return with them by land. They considered it impossible now to interest the Mission, or the Hudson's Bay Company, for a further venture; as these were fully supplied, and it was next to impossible, without money of their own, to buy cattle of either McLoughlin, the Mission, or Ewing Young, who owned the most of the stock in the valley—except such as the French settlers needed for private use. There was a considerable number of recent additions in the valley—the Peoria party furnishing several; and a number of the mountain men, with their families, had recently arrived and had taken claims in the Tualatin Plains—then, as was all the Willamette Valley, a waving sea of grass, summer and winter, of such abundance as to make it positively wicked to withhold the herds that could there fatten, and need feed only upon the rich seed

ends of the tall wild grain. These mountain men were the well-known Robert Newell, George W. Ebberts, Caleb Wilkins, William Doty and Jos. L. Meek. Joseph Gale, who had come with Young, and trapped for the Hudson's Bay Company, was also a member of the colony, and was anxious about cattle and horses.

The active spirits at first, however, seem to have been men above the Willamette Falls. These were John Canan, Ralph L. Kilbourne, Pleasant Armstrong, Henry Woods, George Davis and Jacob Green. In subsequent notes more of their antecedents will be given. With Gale, who was known to be a seaman, the company, comprised as above, wished to make terms, but he did not at first think he could go with them, having just taken a place with the mountain men. For master builder was selected Felix Hathaway—remembered as the arrival in 1829 from the schooner "Convoy." He was an excellent ship carpenter, and with the others selected a spot on the east side of Swan Island, just below Portland, as at present, and there laid the keel with a clear stick of red fir forty-eight feet eight inches long, cut from Sauvies Island. But before ready for launching Hathaway found it very dubious about his pay; and not only that, but provisions showed signs of failing. With purse and flour barrel both empty he judged the company insolvent, and quit. The rest, however, boarded up the sides sufficiently to make the vessel float, launched her, and brought her up to the Falls on the freshet.

Canan and Kilbourne, not yet willing to give up, then sought Gale, and urged him to join in and finish the work. He accordingly sold his place to Courtney M. Walker, who came as secular agent for the Lees, and had acted as agent for Wyeth in keeping a general supervision of Fort William; and taking his family came to the Falls, where lay the hull of the schooner, and with Kilbourne finished the job. But even then it was with difficulty. He was obliged to stop a while and run the mission saw mill, in order to supply his wants; and in the course of the summer was prostrated with fever and ague. But this was not the worst of their difficulty. Several of the company became discouraged and withdrew. But the insuperable obstacle was found in Dr. McLoughlin; he bluntly refused them materials. As only from him could the sails, cordage, and other requirements for rigging a vessel be obtained, this seemed to close the way. In their extremity they applied to Commodore Wilkes, then in the river. He at once took up their complaint, and interviewed McLoughlin as to his reasons for opposing such a creditable enterprise. The doctor replied that they were simply building a coffin for themselves; that Gale, who was at the head of the enterprise, had been a trapper for his company and "what did he know about the sea?" Wilkes replied that he was satisfied that Gale was a thorough sailor; McLoughlin feared then that the object was not honest trade, but some venture that might be construed as piracy on the California Coast; and

that as recognized Governor of Oregon he should himself be held responsible if unaccredited crafts set out from the Columbia. Wilkes was willing, however, to issue the necessary papers to his American boys in Oregon, thus relieving McLoughlin of all responsibility; and he also was willing to be responsible for their credit at the store, closing his interview, "I shall want a considerable amount of such things myself; you may charge the aggregated amount to me, and I will settle the same with you." On this assurance McLoughlin made no further objection, and the young men took advantage of the flourishing condition of their credit to lay in an ample store of cordage, canvas, paints, oil, etc.; but had the satisfaction of meeting their obligation themselves in furs and wheat, without recourse to the generous advances of the admiral.

Before the schooner, which they named "The Star of Oregon," was completed, Gale was asked by Lieutenant Wilkes to satisfy him that he understood navigation; and upon an examination, he was given sailing papers that would be honored in any port of the world. He was also presented by Wilkes with a flag, an ensign, a compass, kedge anchor, a hawser 140 fathoms long, a log line, and two log glasses. From Kilbourne, Couch's mate, he bought a quadrant epitome, and a nautical almanac. "The Star" was a natty little craft, clinker built, of the Baltimore clipper model, 45 feet 8-inch keel, 53 feet 8 inches over all, 9-foot beam, and drew in good ballast 4 feet

6 inches. She was built of oak and red fir, planked with red cedar decking, and neatly painted. On this ambitious but still slender craft, which all predicted would be inadequate to meet the waves of the Pacific, Captain Gale, and his crew of landsmen set forth from the Willamette, August 25th, and took a spin to Fort Vancouver, unfurling the Stars and Stripes as they rounded the British vessel "Vancouver"; and writing a note to the commandant, Mr. Douglas, asking if he had any dispatches for California. But received the short reply, that "as the schooner 'Cadbrough,' Captain Scarborough, will leave port soon we will not trouble you in that particular."

The trip was made; the Columbia River was left the afternoon of September 12, 1842, departure being taken from Cape Disappointment just as the sun went down. A high wind and storm with dense fog tested the first of the American ships built of Oregon timber, but she bounded over the waves without straining a spar or springing a plank, and "dashed through the portals" of the Golden Gate, "like an arrow," September 17th. The boat was sold for 350 cows; but Gale seeing the improbability of so small a party as his returning in safety with them through the Indian country concluded to stay over winter and interest foot-loose men in California, going the next spring to Oregon. This was done, and a company of forty-two men, under Gale as leader, with twelve hundred and fifty head of cattle, six hundred head



of horses and mules, and nearly three thousand sheep, rode over the mountains into the valleys of Oregon. This was a very substantial addition to the wealth of the community. It was also an achievement that presaged great things in the future.

J. L. Parrish might well say with pride, in a letter to Colonel Nesmith about "The Star," that it was he who hammered out the nails and irons, from mission iron, which united the timbers. Thus the mission, as well as the Oregon settlers, and the American admiral, had a hand in the first ship which bore the American colors from the port of "Oregon." Parrish also adds, "I might have said many things more in regard to difficulties of obtaining rigging and sails at Vancouver, but I deem it not necessary here." It was perfectly evident that it was the policy of the British Company to discourage and prevent if possible enterprises like that of Kilbourne and Gale; but this was political rather than personal on the part of McLoughlin.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WILLAMETTE

*(Continued)*



**I**N the meantime, while the missionaries were extending their operations, and the earlier Americans were taking steps to increase their wealth and use the natural productions of the bountiful Willamette Valley by turning upon them herds of cattle, bands of horses, and flocks of sheep, there was a very slow but still constant increase of population from fresh arrivals, who were mostly world wanderers from the sea or continent, for whom Oregon seemed to possess a sort of mystic attraction. Among these are some of the most interesting characters that have ever appeared; and some even whose literary works have had a wide circulation.

As early as 1835 John Turner, the Rocky Mountain giant, who had trapped with Jedediah Smith, and had barely escaped with his life in the attack upon Smith's party at the Umpqua, thought again of Oregon, and making up a little band of six, besides himself and squaw; and with forty-seven good horses and a complete trapping outfit, started hither from California. The other members of the company were George Gay, Dr. W. J. Bailey, Daniel Miller, John Woodworth, Saunders; an Irishman called "Big Tom," and another whose name has not been recorded. Of this party Gay and Dr. Bailey proved to be of most interest to Oregon. Gay was a native of England, being born in Glostershire, and was now but twenty-five years old; but having gone to sea early in life had traveled almost around the world;

his last voyage being on the "Kitty," a whaler to the Pacific. At Monterey, however, he took leave of his ship, and joining Ewing Young, who was then trapping in California, came as far north as the Rogue River. Dr. Bailey was a well educated physician, still young, and also a native of England; but had cared little for professional life, and went to sea, bringing up also in California.

Turner's party met with no difficulty until camping at "The Point of Rocks," on Rogue River. Here they were attacked by Indians, but after a desperate fight, in which all were wounded and two were killed, the trappers succeeded in driving off the savages, who fought strictly as savages, and actually impeded one another by the numbers and disorder of their attack. But the condition of the little band was still most critical. The horses had been driven off by the squaws while the Indians were fighting; three of the rifles had been broken in clubbing the Indians, and their clothes were torn or cut, and their wounds were very painful. Bailey received a gash across the chin which left a scar for life. Provisions were also lost. But by traveling at night until passing out of the hostile country, they reached at length the Willamette. Saunders and Tom gave out in the Umpqua and were left with the Indians, who reported to McLoughlin that both died. After striking the Willamette Turner became confused, thinking this river was the Columbia. From maps that he had seen, Gay, however, was positive that the Columbia ran west,

and struck out alone on the west side of the valley; but before leaving the others cut up his buckskin trousers for moccasins for the party. Clad in his shirt, and still suffering from wounds and bruises, he finally by the west side route of the Rickreal, the fords of the Yamhill at Lafayette, Wapato Lake, and the Scappoose trail, succeeded in reaching Wyeth's fort on Sauvie's Island. Turner, Woodworth and Bailey continued down the Willamette until reaching the Methodist mission at Chemaway, where the inmates were startled by their frightful appearance, as they were gaunt with starvation as well as wounded and nearly naked. They were here cared for most attentively, and Bailey, concluding that he had been a prodigal long enough, decided to settle down to his profession, and became a lifelong resident. Turner returned before many years to his wanderings, being killed at length in California, in 1847, by the accidental discharge of his own rifle. He is characterized by Colonel Nesmith as "The old Kentucky giant, so well known, and famed for his Herculean strength, good nature, quaint oddities, and dauntless courage."

Gay remained in Oregon, and was in the party that went with Slacum on the "Loriot" after cattle. In the Siskiyou Mountains, where there was again trouble with the Indians, he was wounded with an arrow, the stone point of which lodged in his flesh and was carried there for a number of years. By care of the stock that he brought with him, he soon



had a large herd, which roamed at will over the southern part of Yamhill and the northern parts of Polk counties, as now established. On the old Salem road, a few miles south from Dayton, he subsequently built a brick house—said to be the first dwelling of that character in Oregon. Colonel Nesmith says of Gay: “When the writer made the acquaintance of George Gay, forty years ago, he was a handsome, athletic man, of powerful physical organization, combined with great activity, being as fine a horseman as ever bestrode a steed, and as expert a vaquero as ever swung a lasso. . . . His house was a general resort for travelers and emigrants in early days. . . . I have known him to slaughter a bullock for breakfast for his guests, the remnants of which were eaten for supper. Gay was kind and gentle in his deportment, but always retained a dash of rollicking bonhomie, which more or less pertains to the sailor, the trapper, and mountaineer.”

Interest in Oregon as a field for establishing society upon a new and wider plan, without the evils of older communities, continued to attract hither young men of good education and idealistic minds. One such was Rev. J. S. Griffin, a graduate of Oberlin Theological Seminary, under the celebrated evangelist, Charles G. Finney. In the atmosphere and time of this great man Griffin had become deeply impressed with reformatory ideas, such as abolition of slavery, total abstinence, and anti-Romanism. He conceived that in Oregon his new ideas might have

a freer course, and the country from the first be established without the evils that he deplored. He also thought that where nature was unconfined and land and pasturage free, there would be no need of support from the eastern churches. Being accredited, however, by a congregational church in Connecticut, and making an agreement, or "covenant," with Asahel Munger, a mechanic, he, with his wife, and Munger, and his wife, crossed the plains in 1838, visiting at Lapwai and Wailatpu, and at length proceeding to Fort Vancouver, where he was employed for a time as post chaplain. Being of a temperament and character as little executive as he was intense and fixed in his opinions, he found little co-operation with the company, and concluded to occupy a tract of land on Tualatin Plains, near the recent site of Hillsboro. With Munger he made a settlement, and assisted in organizing a congregational church. But his plans were soon much broken by the derangement of his associate, Munger; who finally became completely unbalanced; and conceiving that he had a special revelation, which he was to prove by a physical test, cast himself upon a fire, receiving such injuries that he soon died.

Another of much the same class of ideas was William Geiger, of Helvetia, New York. A considerable number of persons in his town had been thinking of colonizing Oregon, in the interest of higher civilization and reformed morality, and he made the journey as an advance guard and seeker of information. He

had also learned of the settlement in California of Captain Sutter, and wished to examine the Sacramento Valley. With him as traveling companion was Johnson, to whom has been attributed the authorship of the popular story, "The Prairie Flower"; and that he wrote the novel on his journey across the plains, and under the stress of his own feelings, in following then the fortunes of a young woman to whom he was much attached. By others Sidney W. Moss, an immigrant of 1842, is regarded as the author. Johnson went to the Sandwich Islands, never to return; Geiger passed on down to Sutter's fort, but not being so favorably impressed with the Mexican territory, came back to Oregon. It is said that when the two young men reached Fort Vancouver they were asked by the officer to show their passports. Laying their hands on their rifles, they answered, "These are Americans' passports."

Another story of those days, when the young Americans were rather fond of showing their spirit, has been often repeated. One of these applying at the fort for provisions found that his credit was none too good. "Well, never mind," he retorted; "if I am rather poor, I have an uncle back home rich enough to buy out the whole Hudson's Bay Company." "Mr. Woods, Mr. Woods," said Dr. McLoughlin, looking up hastily from his work; "who may this very rich uncle of yours be?"—strongly implying that the young man had but small comprehension of the value of the Hudson's Bay Com-

pany's business. But Woods was quite ready for the question, answering drily, "Uncle Sam." McLoughlin is credited with repeating the story with much relish in after years.

Another American of ideal purposes, and of a character as gentle as St. John, and too generous to accumulate property for himself, was Rev. Harvey Clarke. He arrived in 1840, coming on the self-supporting plan, but being accredited by the Congregational Church of Litchfield, Conn. Of the self-supporting missionaries, Dr. McLoughlin says rather disparagingly, "They expected the Indians would work to support them in return for their teaching; but their plan failed." This does scant justice to their ideas; especially of Harvey Clarke. He established a school first on East Tualatin Plains, admitting not only the children of Indians but of whites; or the half-natives. But upon maturer reflection he saw that there was much better prospect of success if he owned his premises. He therefore removed later to West Tualatin Plains, and on the borders of the larger branch of the Tualatin, or Gale's Creek, took a claim, covering the greater part of the town of Forest Grove, and there opened a school, which has matured into Pacific University.

McLoughlin, no less than all the British writers, was at a loss to understand the American missionary farmer. To their mind the true missionary, or clergyman, was a recluse, neither owning nor caring for home or property; but either satisfied as the

clergymen of the established church of England, with a "living"; or, as the priests of the Catholic organization, with their gown. To own a home, rear a family, and accumulate property seemed to him, as to all the British or Catholic writers, a sign of worldliness and mercenary spirit; and that this threw their whole effort into the light of hypocrisy. Clarke is therefore briefly dismissed by McLoughlin as follows: "In 1840, the Rev. Mr. Clarke, of the Presbyterian [Congregationalist] Church, with his wife, and two laymen with their wives, came across land on the self-supporting system; but as their predecessors, they failed and are now settled in the Willamette." No more generous, or devoted, or more truly successful man than Harvey Clarke ever came to Oregon; and so far from considering that by taking a farm he had retired from his mission, he made this farm the foundation of one of the great beneficent institutions of the commonwealth; donating more than half, and that the part available for town site purposes, to the institution. The two laymen with Clarke were Alvin T. Smith and P. B. Littlejohn. Smith became a farmer at West Tualatin, and also donated largely for educational, church, and missionary purposes. This method of carrying on religious and educational work has been in vogue in America since the landing of the Pilgrims and the days of Penn, and although not readily understood by the English of the later day, whose economic system is based on principles wholly different from the

American, is no less religious; and Clarke is deserving of high praise for applying this same pioneer American plan of missionary and educational work in Oregon. It is thus noticed in an address by Hon. Matthew P. Deady. "In 1840, Harvey Clarke, an independent Congregational missionary, crossed the plains to the Whitman mission, and the following year came into the valley, with some associates, and settled in Tualatin Plains. Among these were Alvin T. Smith and P. B. Littlejohn. . . . This settlement on the Tualatin Plains was an important addition to the active, intelligent American settlement in the country. In his day Mr. Clarke was a leading spirit in it, and an active, useful man and exemplary man. It has been said of him—'The country is blessed by his having lived in it.' The votive tablet, or mural monument of pantheon, cathedral, or abbey, contains no greater eulogy of the dead than this. He was the principal founder and promoter of the school at Forest Grove—since grown into the Pacific University, and one of the oldest and best seats of learning on the coast."

The same year, 1840, the mountain men already alluded to, Robert Newell, Caleb Wilkins, and J. L. Meek, moved with their families from the Rocky Mountains to the Willamette Valley. The occasion deciding them toward the settlement was the final break up of the American Fur Company, and the necessity of providing a home for their growing families—for they were all married men, and had bright,



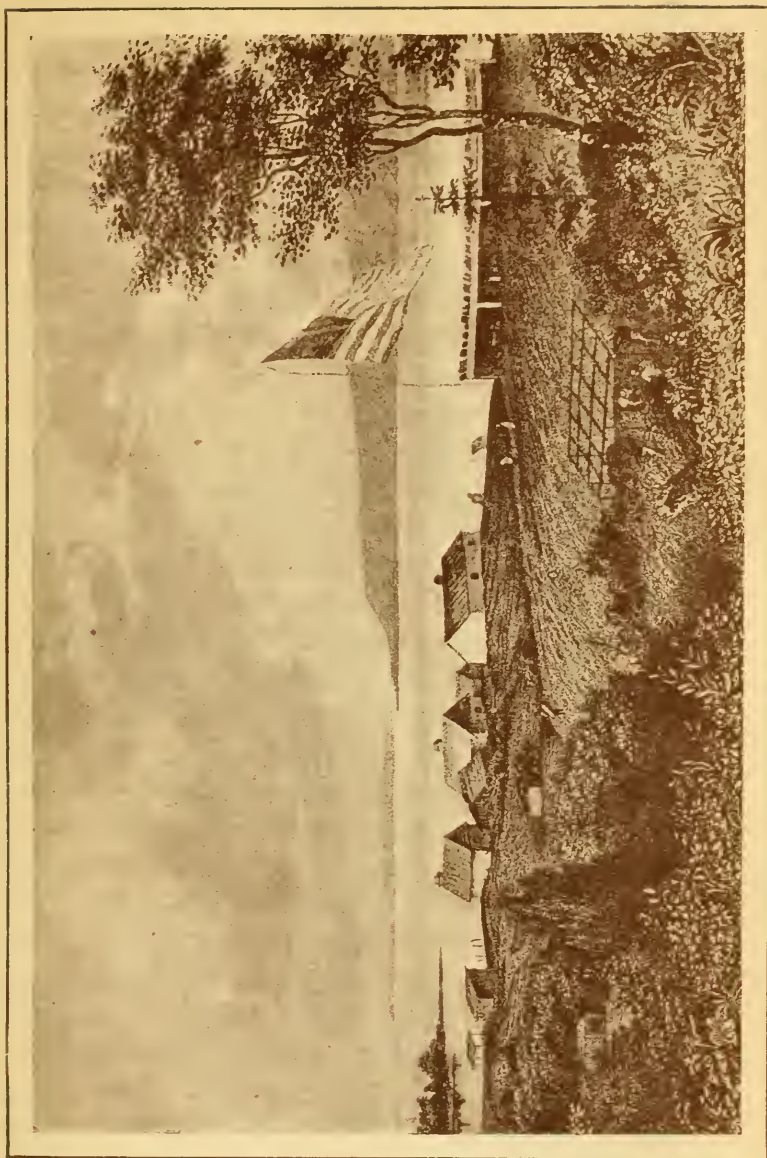
half-native children. Newell had been employed to pilot Clarke and his party to Fort Hall, and received in payment the two wagons which the American missionaries left there. Some account of their journey is best given in Newell's own language—a letter to Hon. Elwood Evans. Newell says: “ At the time I took the wagons I had no idea of bringing them to this country. I exchanged fat horses to the missionaries for their animals, and after they had gone a month or more for Wallamet, and the American Fur Company abandoned the country for good, I concluded to hitch up and try the much dreaded job of bringing a wagon to Oregon. Mr. Caleb Wilkins had a small wagon which Joel Walker had left at Fort Hall. On the 5th of August we put out with three wagons. Joseph L. Meek drove my wagon. In a few days we began to realize the difficult task before us, and found that the continual crashing of the sage under our wagons, which was in many places higher than the mules' backs, was no joke. Seeing our animals beginning to fail, we began to light up, finally threw away our wagon beds, and were quite sorry we had undertaken the job. All the consolation we had was that we broke the first sage on that road, and were too proud to eat anything but dried salmon skins after our provisions had become exhausted. In a rather rough and reduced state we arrived at Dr. Whitman's mission station, in the Walla Walla Valley, where we were met by that hospitable man and kindly made welcome, and feasted accordingly. On

hearing me regret that I had undertaken to bring the wagon, the doctor said, ' Oh, you will never regret it. You have broken the ice, and when others see that wagons have passed they too will pass, and in a few years the valley will be full of our people.' The doctor shook me heartily by the hand; Mrs. Whitman, too, welcomed us, and the Indians walked around the wagons, or what they called horse canoes, and seemed to give it up. We spent a day or so with the doctor, and then went to Fort Walla Walla, where we were kindly received by Mr. P. C. Pambrun, chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, superintendent of that post. On the 1st of October we took leave of those kind people, leaving our wagons and taking the river trail—but we proceeded slowly." The party did not arrive at the Willamette Falls till December, subsisting for weeks upon dried salmon, and upon several occasions compelled to swim the stock across the Columbia and the Willamette.

Newell, Meek, and Wilkins settled soon upon East Tualatin Plains, now one of the best sections of Washington County. G. W. Ebberts and Joseph Gale also took claims in the same neighborhood. This was on the old road, or Indian trail from the Willamette Valley, on the west side to Scappoose Plains, occupied early as the home of Thomas McKay, and Sauvie's Island. It was a rich region, mostly prairie, and covered with many sorts of wild grass, and a turf gorgeous in the early summer with many species of wild flowers. The grass was so abundant, says

Ebberts, that animals were fat on the range summer and winter; and that merely by feeding on the seed ends of the wild grains. There were alternations from the prairie to swale lands, marshy in the winter, or with a sluggish current through the dense grasses, but dry and covered with vegetation as the season advanced. Gale soon sold his place to Courtney M. Walker. After returning from California with his cattle, Gale laid a claim on the west branch of the Tualatin, overlooking the bottom lands of the stream, where the pasturage was also of primeval abundance, and from which in later times several scores of crops of the choicest grain have been taken, and some of the finest farms of Oregon have been made. Gale's house was at the foot of one of the outlying spurs of the coast range, the peak of which has been known by his name; both Gale's Creek and Gale's Peak being familiar in all western Oregon.

The ingress of Americans, although of very slight proportions before 1839, was still sufficient to indicate to the managers of the Hudson's Bay Company that possession by occupation would be insisted upon in the final adjustment of the boundary. From the first it was considered that the actual boundary would be the line of the Columbia. As shown heretofore this would give the British possession of all that were then considered practicable inlets or harbors on the Pacific Coast, north of the Spanish, or Mexican, territories. This was so stated by John Dunn. As reported by Archibald McKinlay, through Dr. Tolmie,



VIEW OF ASTORIA ABOUT 1840

After a print published in "A Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838-1842, by Captain Charles Wilkes, U. S. N." Published in Philadelphia in 1849.





Sir George Simpson held, in 1841, "as a fact not to be doubted, that the Columbia River would be the boundary; and that the company (H. B.) could, by good management, establish a very lucrative trade with the Americans."

To make sure of the boundary, and to adjust this in such a manner that the American settlement on the Willamette would still be practically dependent upon the Hudson's Bay posts, was seen to be a matter requiring careful management. In 1838, after having driven off the Americans under Bonneville and Wyeth by competition in trade, and having been able to buy the "Perkins," and to induce McNeil, the Boston master of the American brig "Lama," to become shipmaster of his company, and to adjust some personal matters, McLoughlin made the journey to London, met the directors of his company, and it was deemed advisable to plant a colony of actual settlers north of the Columbia. Since 1836 there had been some British settlers in the Cowlitz Valley, old Plomondo being one. In order to give the new organization—which was in fact but a sub-corporation of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the stock seems to have been held by officers of that company—a name to indicate settlement rather than trade or business, the title "Puget Sound Agricultural Association" was selected. This came into full operation in 1840. In 1841 a considerable body of settlers from the Red River colony of Manitoba arrived. They were the mixed population, or "Red River"



people. The men were largely whites, and of Scotch blood. There were some white women of English lineage. The history of this settlement has been thus epitomized by Judge M. P. Deady. "In 1837 the formation of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company was commenced by some of the principal persons of the Hudson's Bay Company, for the purpose of bringing into the country a British agricultural population to aid by their presence and numbers in the approaching contest for the occupation of the soil. Before 1840 the company was completely organized, and in 1841 a party of settlers was brought from Red River, Rupert's Land, and settled on the Cowlitz and Nisqually, on the north side of the Columbia. In 1843 Dr. Tolmie was placed in charge at Nisqually, the principal place of operations. But the settlement never thrived and the scheme failed signally. In many respects the location was not a favorable one for agricultural pursuits; and some of the settlers, who were attracted to the Willamette Valley on account of its superior advantages, left the company and eventually cast their weight on the American side of the question."

The causes of dissatisfaction were on account of the stony or gravelly soil, which made all husbandry except herding cattle and sheep, little profitable; and still more that they were simply employees of a corporation. The idea indicated in the name that this was an agricultural settlement, was wholly a misnomer. These were still employees of the company.

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Not only the rich soils of the Willamette Valley, but the idea of owning their own farms and herds soon took hold of the mind of the Nisqually settlers, and as no man is a more radical Democrat than the Englishman, once given the opportunity, it was not surprising that Oregon and the Americans soon became the beneficiary of this British effort at colonization.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WILLAMETTE

*(Continued)*



**W**HILE these minute accretions to the population of the Willamette Valley community were being made, two very important events took place which greatly hastened the movement of the country south of the Columbia toward American Government. The first was occasioned by the death of Ewing Young, at his home on the Chehalem, in February of 1841. He was associated at this time with Sidney W. Smith, by whom he was nursed in his last illness; which was of a painful, and even terrible nature. By pressure on the brain of a sac of watery fluid—as shown by autopsy—he became delirious, and in the chill of an unusually cold period, the dampness gathering on his brow, as he expired, was turned to frost. On account of his former business of distillation, Smith, who occasionally produced liquors by means of old gun barrels for his worm, was regarded somewhat superstitiously by the Indians; and was himself anxious that the death of Young should be duly attested, and that his property should be probated. Thus was encountered a situation which might at any time occur; probating and disposing legally of the property of the deceased. As Young belonged neither to the Hudson's Bay Company nor to the Mission, who had their own procedure, this could be done only by some sort of public meeting, and suggested the necessity of some civil authority.

The funeral was held February 17th, and was at-



tended by almost the entire settlement. After the religious services had been concluded, the need of some civil authority to administer the estate was mentioned, and a meeting for the next day to conclude the business was appointed to be held at the Methodist Mission.\* This was well attended, and the sentiment was strong, especially among those not connected with either the Mission or the Company, that some sort of civil authority should be established. After discussion it was decided to appoint a committee to form a constitution and draft a code of laws. The committee consisted of the following: Rev. F. N. Blanchet, Rev. Jason Lee, Gustavus Hines, J. L. Parrish, D. Donpierre, M. Charlevaux, Robert Moore, E. Lucier, and Wm. Johnson. Choice of governor was indefinitely deferred, the complications of an executive with the Hudson's Bay people being apparent, and the principal object now in view being some sort of a judicial authority which would be respected by common consent. Dr. Ira L. Babcock, of the Mission, was chosen supreme judge; G. W. LeBreton, clerk and recorder of public documents; Wm. Johnson was elected sheriff; Laderoot, Billique, and McCarty, constables; and Gervais, Cannon, Robert Moore, and L. H. Judson, justices of the peace. Of this meeting David Leslie was chosen chairman.

But beyond probating and disposing of the prop-

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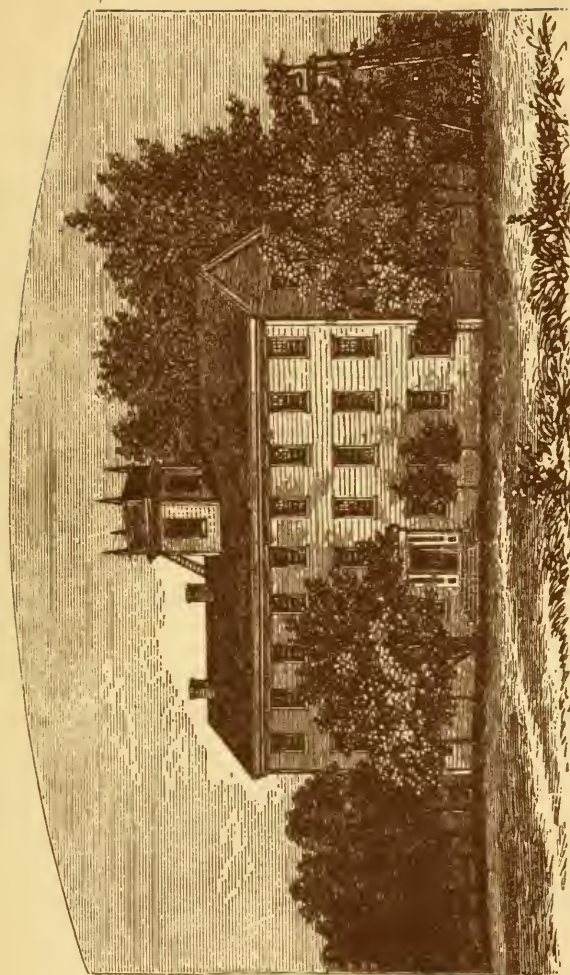
\*A meeting had already been held on the 7th looking to civil organization, and was a good preparation for that of the 18th.

erty of Ewing Young this effort at organizing a civil authority was suffered to lapse. As stated by Gustavus Hines, "The origin of the attempt to form a sort of provisional government was the removal by death of the late Ewing Young, leaving, as he did, a large and unsettled estate, with no one to administer it, and no law to control its administration. The exigency of the case having been met by the appointment of a judge with probate powers, who entered immediately upon his duties, and disposed of the estate of Ewing Young to the entire satisfaction of the community; and the fact that some of the most influential citizens of the country, and especially some of the legislative committee, were averse to the idea of establishing a permanent organization so long as the peace and harmony of the community could possibly be preserved without it, the subject was permitted to die away, and the committee for drafting a constitution and code of laws did not meet according to instructions, nor did the meeting at which they were expected to report ever take place."

Further reasons for deferring action were found in the advice of Lieutenant Wilkes, who did not think the time ripe for establishing a local government; he rather counseled that a petition to Congress would be more serviceable in obtaining what they desired. Hines says, "In addition to this, the officers of this squadron were consulted on the subject of organizing the country into a civil compact, and were found to be decidedly opposed to the scheme, and recommend-

ed that the subject be allowed to rest. They encouraged the people in the belief that the United States Government would probably soon extend jurisdiction over the country. But while "suffered to rest" the discussion and the thought that the movement had called forth, acted to familiarize all the Americans in Oregon with the first principles of civil organization. The Oregon community did for a time assume by general agreement the functions of government, and having disposed of the business in hand, laid aside the authority with which they had performed the act. Within a short time, as we shall see, they again assumed governmental functions. Quiet discussion was held by some of the settlers with officers or attaches of the Wilkes' Expedition, as to the best procedure in case a permanent local government organization was to be effected, and many valuable suggestions were gained. The use to which they at length placed the property of Young, that of building a jail, was also significant; indicating that the people contemplated permanent occupation of Oregon, and to enforce good order. It is a satisfaction, however, as has recently been remarked by Governor Geer, that the funds thus obtained were held as rather a trust than a tax; and upon finding an heir, Joaquin Young, of California, this was returned.

As to the outcome of the first effort to establish a provisional government, J. Quinn Thornton has said: "I have explored all the known and even sus-



### THE OREGON INSTITUTE

Erected at Chemekete in 1842 and originally known as The Indian Manual Labor School. Name changed to Oregon Institute in 1844.



pected sources of authority for the purpose of learning whether the meeting proposed for October was held. Even tradition furnishes no evidence of its having been held, and the inference therefore is that it was not. And this is rendered nearly certain by the fact that the committee appointed to confer with Commodore Wilkes and Dr. McLoughlin abandoned all further ideas of organizing a civil government for the time being because, in a conference with these gentlemen, they were found to be decidedly opposed to the scheme, and they recommended that the subject be allowed to rest, . . . believing as they did that the moral sense of right and wrong by which the people had hitherto been held together as a community, was sufficient for all the legitimate ends of government among a people who were so few in number and so simple in their manners. . . . But the American agricultural settlers were greatly disappointed. . . . It was not difficult to see what molded Dr. McLoughlin's opinion, as the representative of the Hudson's Bay Company, which then had the absolute control of the country, and it was desirable to keep and control it to the end; which [end] they were sharp-sighted enough to see would very soon be arrived at through the natural result of events which would certainly follow the organization of civil government."

Another event of great importance to young Oregon, in 1841—remembering the visit of the Wilkes' Expedition, the building and sailing of the "Star of



Oregon," the arrival of the Independent missionaries and Rocky Mountain men, and the first discussion and endeavor as to forming the local government as among the number—was the departure of Dr. Elijah White east. The services of this missionary doctor have been spoken of indifferently by almost all the writers on Oregon history. Bancroft and Gray alike speak of him as vain and pompous, and even otherwise objectionable; and by H. K. Hines, in his "Missionary History," White is scarcely mentioned.

Soon after the arrival of the "great reinforcement" of 1840, dissensions arose among the Methodist missionaries, which to the historian are quite explicable. Dr. McLoughlin mentions this period of missionary development rather drily as follows: "It is but justice to these pioneers to say that no men, in my opinion, could exert themselves more zealously than they did until 1840, when they received a large reinforcement of forty or more persons; then the newcomers began to neglect their duties, discord sprung up among them, and the mission broke up."

The simple fact was that this large party came to Oregon under a double purpose; partly for conducting missionary work, and partly for settlement. It was clear to none of them when coming, nor for some time afterward, what their work was to be. Differences of opinion began to arise, as the different mem-

bers of the mission tried to adjust themselves to the new situation; some endeavoring to keep as closely as possible to the idea of missionary work to the Indians,\* others seeing that the greater need was missionary and educational work for the whites; and still others concluding that here was the place for them to establish homes, engage in farming or business, and establish some sort of government order

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\*The Indian word Chemekete, or Chemeketa, or Chemukta, as variously pronounced, is stated by Hines to mean, "Here we Rest"—and accords in signification with the Anglicised form of the Hebrew term, meaning peace—the Salem of to-day. It was selected as early as 1840 as a millsite for the mission, the swift stream Mill Creek here dashing over the gravelly banks, or bluffs, where the Willamette reaches and wears the general plain, or old lake floor, of the valley. This water power, which has since been very extensively utilized, thus first determined the location of the capital; and the beautiful, slightly sloping plain itself was seen to afford unsurpassed building sites.

The change in location of the Missionary school is thus mentioned by H. K. Hines: "During the year 1841 some changes were made that had such a bearing on the future history of the country that they require special mention. One was the removal of 'The Indian Manual Labor School' from the old mission station to 'Chemekete,' near where the mission mills had been erected, and the erection of a dwelling house not far from the school. This involved, of course, the removal of the entire missionary center from the place which Mr. Lee had chosen for the mission farm at the first, about ten miles southward. The mill, the labor school building and the residence were the first buildings erected in Chemekete, which is now Salem, the capital of the State. They were all built by the mission under the direction of Mr. Lee, and they marked a distinct advance in the condition, prospects and even expectations of those who were giving direction to the work of the church in Oregon. They were all of a character and style to indicate that those who designed them felt assured that the country was passing out of the era of wigwams and cabins and entering the new era of painted homes and belfried school houses."

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favorable to their undertakings. Each one was left to interpret his own duty, or to strike out a career for himself. What seemed to McLoughlin as the break up of the mission was in fact the germination of American settlement. Dr. White, who bears the fame of being an intriguer and seeking personal preferment, was defeated in his designs, and abruptly terminated his connection with the mission. Gray says: "Jason Lee soon found out the character of this wolf in sheep's clothing, and presented charges against him for his immorality, and expelled him from the mission. Previous to leaving the country he called a public meeting and made his statements, and attempted to mob Mr. Lee and get the settlers to give him a character, in both of which he failed, and left the country to impose upon the government at Washington as he had done upon the mission and early settlers of Oregon."

Notwithstanding the shadow of this somewhat lurid cloud under which he retired from his missionary work, White retained an interest in the settlement, and in passing across the frontier found eager audiences to listen to his account of the land of Oregon. His arrival east from this then almost unknown country was quickly noted by Senator Linn, of Missouri, ever on the alert to learn of Oregon, whose cause he had long before this espoused, and requested that White repair to Washington. It was made evident there to the government that some sort of resident American officer in Oregon would be very

desirable, if for nothing else that he might report regularly upon the movements of the British. What sort of an officer they might appoint under the anomalous relation that the territory bore to the United States was a delicate question. None seemed ready as yet to propose calling off the treaty of joint occupancy, giving the year's notice provided in the treaty. Nor was it advisable to give occasion of offense to the British Government. Somewhat astutely it was devised to appoint an officer with an indefinite title of Sub-Indian Agent for Oregon. To this office White was appointed. Whom he was to be "under," or how he was to divide his power with the Hudson's Bay Company in Oregon does not appear. But with this recognition at Washington and with a federal commission to support his return he at once set about his journey across the plains; and largely increased, if he were not actually the organizer of an immigration of over one hundred persons. Among the number to join the party was Judge Columbia Lancaster, who was obliged, however, to return east when but a few days' journey from the frontier on account of the sickness of his wife, but came later. Others of the company were A. L. Lovejoy, afterward Adjutant-General of Oregon, and L. W. Hastings, both lawyers; S. W. Moss, T. J. Shadden, J. L. Morrison, John Force, James Force, Hugh Burns, Darling Smith, and Medorem Crawford. Fifty-one men are named by the latter. The company was to a large extent made up of rov-

ing persons of the Mississippi Basin, "some of whom never remained in one place longer than to obtain the means to travel; and of one family in particular [it was said], that they had practically lived in a wagon for more than twenty years, only remaining in one locality long enough to make one crop, which they had done in every State and Territory in the Mississippi Valley." Such were excellent persons to beat the trail across the continent; though those particular rovers did not prove good residents of the new Territory rising on the Pacific. About one-third went the next year to California; some coming back again to Oregon.

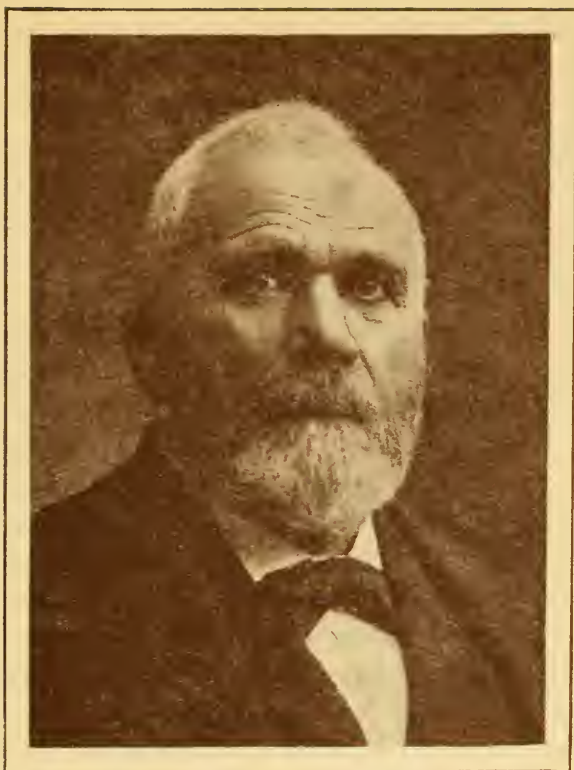
As to his first interest in the immigration to Oregon Mr. Crawford has said: "In the spring of 1842 Elijah White, an old acquaintance of our family, who had spent three years in Oregon, connected with the Methodist mission, visited my father's house in the village of Havana, N. Y., and told us of Oregon, its rich soil, mild climate and beautiful scenery. He had just been appointed 'Sub-Agent of Indian Affairs, west of the Rocky Mountains,' and was, I believe, the first Indian agent ever appointed by our government for the Pacific Coast. He being about to start overland to Oregon, I at once decided to accompany him, and on the 17th day of March, with Dr. White, Nathaniel Crocker, Alexander McKay and John McKay, left home for the first time in my life, never previously having been out of my native State. The McKays were natives of Oregon, broth-

ers of William McKay, known by many of you. The three brothers had been sent by their father, Thomas McKay, to be educated, and William was then attending the medical college at Geneva, N. Y."

The success of the immigration over a route as little known to these emigrants as it had been to Farnham and his Oregon Dragoons, is attributed by Crawford as chiefly due to White. But after reaching Fort Laramie, White and the two young men, sons of Thomas McKay, could not trace the landmarks. At this place, not then a military, but a trading post—or rather two trading posts—one belonging to the American Fur Company, and the other to Sybille and Richard—it became apparent that it would be a piece of recklessness to proceed further without a guide. Opportunely the old trapper, Captain Fitzpatrick, happened to be at the fort and was induced for the sum of five hundred dollars to guide the party to Fort Hall. He was employed by Dr. White. Another fur trader found here was a young man from Canada, who had been employed for some time by Sybille and Richard as a clerk, trading among the Sioux Indians. This was Francis Xavier Matthieu, a native of Terrebonne, Canada, and one of those " patriots " who took part in the agitation and finally the rebellion for the equal rights of the Canadians, in the movement of Papineau. He had escaped to the United States, and taken up the life of Indian trader. Matthieu, with a party of trappers from the Black Hills, where they had spent



the previous winter, found the Oregon immigrants at the post, and immediately made up his mind that now was his chance to begin life in a more settled community. Crawford says: "Here we were joined by my friend, F. X. Matthieu, and three others; and I doubt if any individuals ever started to Oregon on shorter notice, or with less baggage. It was a marvelous thing to my inexperienced mind to see men coolly mount their ponies, and with no provision or outfit other than a buffalo robe, a gun and a tin cup, each, start off on a journey to an unknown country, hundreds of miles distant, requiring long months of travel." As will be seen later, Matthieu, who had been trained in American ideas by an admirer of republican institutions in his boyish school days, and had ardently desired, and all but fatally struggled to see them realized in his native land, became a most important actor in reaching something of the free government in which he believed in Oregon. Matthieu was also of much assistance to the emigrants, as he was well acquainted with the Indians and knew how to preserve their good will. This came in with good result at Independence Rock, where a band of some five hundred Sioux overtook and captured Hastings and Lovejoy, who had lingered behind the wagons in order to cut their names upon the face of the cliff. At Matthieu's suggestion the train was halted until the Indians, in wild fashion, arrived with the crestfallen prisoners, and demanded a good ransom, which was given, and the prisoners were released. A few days



F. X. MATTHIEU

The last survivor of those who participated in the formation of the Provisional Government of Oregon.



later a much larger band, or a number of bands, of Sioux and Blackfeet, overtook the train, which had to be halted and inspected by the savages; and many presents were asked and given. Among other things ardently craved by the great chief was a handsome daughter of one of the pioneers; which it required some circumspection to refuse without giving offense. True to their traditions, as shown as early as the days of Lewis and Clark, when his Sioux visitors desired a "little of the great father's milk," these Indians begged incessantly for whisky, and could not be persuaded that it was not one of the chief articles carried in the wagons.

On Green River a part of the baggage and wagons was discarded; and at Fort Hall all the wagons were taken down and sold to the commandant, or cut up to make pack saddles for horses or oxen, and the company was divided up into small parties, which came on as they could to Oregon City. The latter stretch of the journey is described by Crawford as the most difficult. He says: "From Walla Walla to the Willamette Falls occupied about twenty days, and, all things considered, was the hardest part of the journey; what with the drifting sands, rocky cliffs and rapid streams along the Columbia River, and the gorges, torrents, and thickets of the Cascade Mountains, it seems incredible how, with our worn out and emaciated animals, we ever reached our destination. On the 5th of October, our little party, tired, ragged and hungry, arrived at the falls, now

Oregon City, where we found the first habitations west of the Cascade Mountains. Here several members of the Methodist mission were located. Our gratification on arriving safely after so long and perilous a journey was shared by these hospitable people, each of whom seemed anxious to give us hearty welcome, and render us every assistance in his power.”

There was no apprehension felt on account of the Indians from Fort Hall westward, and no precautions against them were taken, nor were these little sections of the fagged American company molested. On the contrary they traveled among the Nez Perces and Cayuses and Walla Wallas as among any community of white people, and depended upon them for salmon and other supplies, which could be obtained at trifling expense. Whitman's, to these as to the earlier party of Farnham and Shortess, and the migrating mountain men and independent missionaries, was an oasis of abundance in the wilderness, where they “were most hospitably received, and supplied with flour and vegetables.” Here, as vividly recalled by Crawford, was the first bread tasted since he left Fort Laramie—buffalo and salmon having been the staples from that point.

To the missionaries, with their stations and their active efforts in promoting immigration to Oregon, Crawford is disposed to give large credit for the settlement of this territory. He says: “While I agree with the generally accepted opinion that the primary object for which the missionaries were sent

to this land was an entire failure, still I think just credit is not generally accorded them for the influence their presence and establishments had in hastening and facilitating the settlement of the country. It was as a missionary that Dr. White acquired his knowledge of the country of Oregon, which induced him to apply for, and enabled him to obtain a kind of roving commission as Sub-Indian agent west of the Rocky Mountains, and a few hundred dollars to enable him to make the trip across the continent. His appointment being made public on the western frontier, he gained accessions to our company, while his presence gave us confidence, secured to us consideration from the traders, and above all, enabled us to have a guide and interpreter from Fort Laramie to Fort Hall, without whom we could not have accomplished the journey. The departure of our company for Oregon was extensively published and commented upon throughout the western States, and our safe arrival here was reported by Dr. Whitman, who returned that fall and winter; hence the next emigration had the knowledge that one company had safely preceded them. They also had the experience and advice of Dr. Whitman and General Lovejoy to guide and counsel them on their journey. Thus I would give credit indirectly to the Methodist mission for the successful journey of the first immigration of 1842, and directly to Dr. Whitman for the safe arrival of the large and influential immigration of 1843, which practically settled the question of occupa-



tion by American citizens of this then disputed territory."

While this is a generous, and probably just, estimate of one well acquainted by experience with the subject, the effort to emphasize the work of the missionaries to the exclusion of others, or to claim the credit of one mission body to the discredit of others, is a partiality to which the historian will not lend his approval. These little, thin, and often detached and dispersed bands of men and women, pushing their way out across the plains and over the mountains, the first scarcely perceptible columns of civilized life, were detachments of American life, with all its multiple characters and beliefs, such as will grow and flourish in a free country, and where all that is in man is thus induced to express itself in life. It was this very multiplicity and variety that enabled Americans to occupy the breadth of the continent. The religious life of the Americans could not be dispensed with in accomplishing the result; nor could any shade of religious persuasion and conviction be found supernumerary. Lee and White, the Methodists; Whitman, the Presbyterian; Clarke, the Congregationalist; Le Breton and Matthieu, of Catholic training and predilections, were all found indispensable in securing Oregon for the United States; and the mountain men, Lovejoy, the attorney; Crawford, who had no particular religious preferences; Young and Smith, who were hardly persuaded not to manufacture "Blue Ruin," had

their corner to guard, or their tower to scale. It was the "heroic many" that led the way from the Mississippi to the Pacific.

With this immigration it became apparent that the Willamette Valley was already, or soon would be, preponderatingly American. Whatever expectation had been entertained that on the banks of the Willamette would grow up another Red River settlement, consisting chiefly of old servants of the British Fur Company and a mixed population of half-natives, with French blood and language predominating, and mingled with the Indian jargon forming the medium of thought and speech, was rapidly passing away. This was to be chiefly a white population, with white women as well as men; English in speech, and American in education and aspirations. Nevertheless this was to be tested.

In order that the events of the next chapter may be better understood it is convenient to place here a list and short account of all the men, British, French-Canadian, and American living in the bounds of Oregon at the close of the year 1842.

1805.—"One of these Canadians, I think his name was De Loar, lived near Campoeg, was one of Lewis and Clark's party that came to Oregon in 1805, and subsequently returned here in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, and for many years enjoyed the appellation 'Oldest inhabitant.'"—J. W. Nesmith, 1875.

1805.—“ Philip Degie, born at Sorel, Canada, in 1739, died February 27, 1847, aged 108 years. This *oldest* inhabitant first crossed the continent with Lewis and Clark.”—Willard H. Rees, 1879. [Whether the “ De Loar ” and the “ Degie ” were the same person; and whether it was Philip Degie, who lived on French Prairie, or his father that crossed the continent with Lewis and Clark, are matters of conjecture. But Rees is more probably correct.—ED.].

1811.—Thomas McKay, Hudson’s Bay Company, captain; owned farm on Scappoose; arrived on “ Tonquin ”; sons, Alexander, John, William, and Donald; wife, native woman of the Chinook nation.

Michael La Framboise, on “ Tonquin ”; farmer on the Willamette.

1812.—Joseph Gervais, arrived with Wilson P. Hunt; farmer at Chemaway; wife, Yaimast, daughter of Kobaiway; son, Joseph.

Louis Labonte, arrived with Hunt; farmer at Chemaway; wife, Kilakotah, daughter of Kobaiway; son, Louis, Jr.

Etienne Lucier, from Canada, arrived with Hunt; farmer at Chewewa, credited by McLoughlin as the first settler; native wife; a daughter, Felicite, married to Donald Manson.

William Cannon, from Pennsylvania, millwright; lived at French Prairie and Vancouver.

Antoine Revoir (?), from Canada, farmer on French Prairie.

Dubruil, farmer, on French Prairie.

1818.—James Birnie, from Scotland; lived at Astoria and Cathlamet; native wife and family.

William Latta, from Scotland; trader at Astoria; reputed as a man of great native ability.

John Scarborough, from England; pilot for Hudson's Bay Company on the Columbia. "Scarborough's Hill" named for him.

Peter Skeen Ogden, from Montreal; son of Judge Ogden; Factor and Chief Factor after McLoughlin's retirement at Vancouver.

1824.—Dr. John McLoughlin, born at Quebec, Canada; Chief Factor at Fort Vancouver over the entire Oregon and New Caledonia district; removed to Oregon City, where he died; wife, widow of Alexander McKay; sons, John, Jr.; Joseph, now of Spokane, Wash.

James Douglas, born in Jamaica, West Indies; stationed in New Caledonia and at Fort Vancouver; afterward at Victoria; Justice of the Peace for Canada, in Oregon, and first Governor of British Columbia; also knighted; wife, Nellie, daughter of Wm. Connell; family living at Victoria.

1829.—Felix Hathaway, American, probably Massachusetts; arrived with Captain Thompson, on

the schooner "Convoy," at same time as wreck of the Hudson's Bay vessel "William and Ann"; farmer, lived in east Chehalem.

- 1832.—Solomon Howard Smith, from New Hampshire; arrived with Nathaniel J. Wyeth; was discharged at Fort Vancouver, and opened a school there—John Ball having taught a few weeks previously; also taught school at Chemaway; settled near the mouth of the Chehalem; afterward lived at Clatsop Plains, where he died; wife, Helen Celiast, daughter of Kobaiway; son, Silas B. Smith, and two daughters.

Calvin Tibbitts, from Maine; arrived with Wyeth; stonecutter; settled near Chemaway, and afterward on Clatsop Plains; native wife, of the Clatsop tribe.

Sergeant.

- 1834.—Jason Lee, from Canada, but of American family; established first mission at Chemaway. Twice married.

Courtney M. Walker; arrived with W. Lee, as secular agent; was employed by Wyeth as keeper of Fort William on Sauvie's Island; later bought Gale's place on East Tualatin; moved at length to Tillamook County.

T. J. Hubbard; arrived with Wyeth; settled near the point now called "Hubbard."

James A. O'Neil; arrived with Wyeth; settled west of Willamette River.

Webley Hauxhurst; arrived in autumn from

California with Ewing Young; settled on French Prairie; erected gristmill.

John McCarty; came with Cattle Company from California, led by Ewing Young, 1837.

Joseph Gale, American; arrived with Ewing Young; finished, and was captain of "Star of Oregon"; settled on east Tualatin Plains, and afterward at the foot of Gale's Peak, on the west branch of the Tualatin.

1836.—W. H. Gray, from New York; missionary of the American Board; settled at Alpowas; later in Willamette Valley, and on Clatsop Plains, and Astoria; wife, Mary Dix, of New York.

Marcus Whitman, Massachusetts and New York; missionary of American Board; stationed at Waiilatpu, now Whitman's, seven miles north of Walla Walla; killed by Cayuse Indians, 1847; wife, Narcissa Prentiss, New York; daughter, Alice Clarissa, drowned in Walla Walla River.

H. H. Spalding, from New York State; missionary of American Board; settled at Lapwai, Idaho; wife, Eliza Hart, New York State; son, Henry Spalding, of Penawawa; daughter, Eliza, Mrs. Warren, of Brownsville, Ore.

1837.—By American bark "Diana": Dr. Elijah White, from New York State; missionary physician; returned east 1841; received appointment as Sub-Indian agent; came the second time overland to Oregon, 1842; wife and child,



from New York; a son drowned in the Columbia River.

Alanson Beers, missionary; with wife.

W. H. Willson, missionary; settled at Mission and Salem.

J. Whitecomb, missionary; settled near Salem.

Anna Maria Pittman, married to Jason Lee.

Susan Downing, married to Cyrus Shepard. (Shepard deceased, 1841.)

H. K. W. Perkins, second reënforcement; missionary; Dalles.

Rev. David Leslie; with wife and three daughters.

Miss Margaret Smith, missionary.

Miss E. Johnson, missionary.

Dr. W. J. Bailey, from California, with Turner, an Englishman; physician; lived many years near Champoege, where he also died.

George Gay, sailor from England, left ship at Monterey; trapped with Ewing Young; came to Oregon with Turner; settled near Dayton, on Salem road; built first brick dwelling.

John Turner, an American, Rocky Mountain man; came first in party of Jedediah Smith to Oregon; escaped massacre from Umpqua Indians—but four surviving from a party of eighteen; made second trip to Oregon, 1837; barely escaped from Rogue River Indians; died in California by accidental discharge of his own gun.

1838.—Rev. Elkanah Walker, from Maine; and wife,

Mary Richardson Walker; missionary of American Board; stationed at Tshimikain, or Walker's Prairie, near Spokane; seven sons, one daughter.

Rev. Cushing Eells, and wife, missionary of American Board; settled at Tshimikain; two sons now living.

James Conner, native wife and child; from Rocky Mountains.

Richard Williams, from Rocky Mountains.

Rev. F. N. Blanchet, Roman Catholic missionary; stationed at Fort Vancouver and French Prairie.

Rev. Modeste Demers, Roman Catholic missionary; Vancouver, French Prairie, and Cowlitz Plain.

1839.—Rev. J. S. Griffin, from Ohio and New England; married at St. Louis; Independent missionary: fitted out by Congregationalists of the Litchfield, Conn., Association; settled on Tualatin Plains.

Asahel Munger, and wife; Munger became deranged, and died by suicide at his home on Tualatin Plains.

Robert Shortess, American from Illinois; settled near Astoria.

E. O. Hall, from Sandwich Islands; with first printing press.

Sidney W. Smith, American, from Illinois or St. Louis; settled in Chehalem Valley; started from Peoria, Ill., with Farnham.

Richard H. Eakin, native of England; born 1817; arrived with Captain J. H. Couch, after making two trips around the world; settled in Willamette Valley; married a native woman, raised and educated a large family; saddler and farmer.

John H. Couch, from Newburyport, Mass.; arrived first in brig "Maryland"; settled subsequently at Portland, occupying "Couch's Addition" as his donation claim.

G. W. LeBreton, arrived on the "Maryland"; was killed in an affray with Indians; Cockstock's difficulty at Oregon City.

William Johnson, an English sailor, who became an American sailor on the "Constitution"; settled in what is now south Portland; native family.

John McCadden, mentioned as coming to Oregon on "Maryland," but probably not remaining.

Richard McCary, an English sailor, but coming over the Rocky Mountains.

Wm. Geiger, from western New York; arrived with William Johnson, author of "The Prairie Flower," and Lawson and Keiser; went to California, but returned, and was at Whitman's, winter of 1842.

1840.—Arrival of the "Lausanne," Captain Spalding, with the "Great Reinforcement" for

the Methodist Mission, returning with Jason Lee.

Rev. J. H. Frost and wife; Clatsop Plains.

Rev. A. F. Waller and wife, two children; Oregon City.

Rev. W. H. Kone and wife; Clatsop Plains.

Rev. Gustavus Hines, wife and sister; Umpqua.

Rev. L. H. Judson, wife and two children; settled later on Clatsop Plains.

Rev. J. L. Parrish, wife and two children; blacksmith; stationed at Clatsop Plains, and later at Salem; one of the founders of Salem.

Rev. G. P. Richmond, wife and three children; stationed at Fort Nisqually.

Rev. A. P. Olley and wife; at the Mission.

George Abernethy, steward; wife and two children; stationed at the Mission, afterward engaged in business at Oregon City; became first Governor under Provisional Government.

H. Campbell, wife and one child.

W. W. Raymond and wife; employed at the Mission; entered subsequently into the Indian service; settled on Clatsop Plains, or Tanzy Point.

H. B. Brewer and wife.

I. L. Babcock and wife; Babcock was stationed as physician at the Mission; was appointed judge, under the temporary government of 1841.

Miss Elmira Phillips; married subsequently to W. W. Raymond.

Miss Amira Phelps, married to Joseph Holman; residing near Salem.

Miss C. A. Clark.

Miss Maria T. Ware, married to Daniel Lee.

Miss Orpha Lankton, married to David Carter.

Rev. Harvey Clarke from New England; Independent missionary; settled at length on west Tualatin Plains; organized a Congregational Church; became the principal founder of Pacific University.

Alvin T. Smith, from New England; settled on the west Tualatin.

P. B. Littlejohn, Independent missionary; on Tualatin Plains.

Robert Moore, from Peoria, Ill.; settled at "Robin's Nest," west side of Willamette Falls.

Amos Cook, from Peoria, Ill.; settled at fords of the Yamhill, near present town of Lafayette.

Francis Fletcher, of the Peoria party; settled on the Yamhill River, between Lafayette and Dayton, as at present.

Joseph Holman, of the Peoria party, settled at the Mission; subsequently went into business at Salem.

Rev. P. J. De Smet, Roman Catholic missionary; stationed at Kalispel and in the Rocky Mountains.

Joseph L. Meek, from Virginia and the Rocky

Mountains; settled on east Tualatin Plains; native family; daughter, Helen Mar, perished in the Whitman massacre.

Caleb Wilkins, from the Rocky Mountains; settled on east Tualatin Plains; native family.

Dr. Robert Newell, from the Rocky Mountains; settled on east Tualatin, and later at Champoege.

William M. Doty (Doughty), from Rocky Mountains; settled in west Chehalem, at the foot of Chehalem Mountain; native wife and family.

John Larrison, from Rocky Mountains; settled in Chehalem Valley, above Sidney Smith's homestead. With Larrison lived Baptist De Guerre; Larrison had native wife and one child.

Phillip Thompson, from Rocky Mountains, a native (probably) of Tennessee; native wife of the Shoshone Indians; several children (date of Thompson's arrival is not very certain).

G. W. Ebberts, settled on east Tualatin; Rocky Mountain man; native family; several sons and daughters.

1841.—This year arrived a considerable immigration of the Puget Sound Agricultural Association. A number of these soon came into the Willamette Valley—Monroe, Buxton, I. M. Black, and John Flett were probably of the number. Baldr, an Englishman, with an English wife, also arrived from the Nisqually, and were employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, on a north branch of



the Tualatin, since called from their occupation there "Dairy Creek."\*

Monroe settled near the present town of Centreville, on same stream. Wren, also from the Nisqually, settled here. Black settled a few miles north of Forest Grove.

John Flett settled near Wapato Lake. Flett was from the Red River Colony, and had a native family.

1842.—Those of this year who remained in Oregon are as follows:

Pleasant Armstrong, settled in Yamhill County.

Hugh Burns, at Willamette Falls, west side, "Multnomah City."

Medorem Crawford, settled on the Yamhill, near Dayton.

David Carter, settled finally on "Carter's Heights," Portland.

James Force and John Force, at Oregon City; business.

S. W. Moss, settled at Oregon City; by some the "Prairie Flower" has been attributed to his authorship.

J. L. Morrison, settled at Oregon City, and

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\* "A colony of about forty families arrived from the Red River settlement to colonize Puget Sound, under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company, consisting of English, Scotch and French Canadians; but they did not like the [that] country or their treatment, and soon settled on the Oregon side of the Columbia and were received as citizens."—Brown's History.

later at Portland, establishing a carpenter shop on the street since called for his name.

J. W. Perry, settled finally on Clatsop Plains.

J. R. Robb, final residence at Portland.

Thomas Shadden; went to California, but returned and settled near McMinnville.

Darling Smith, settled on west branch of Tualatin.

1842.—Francis W. Pettygrove, from Maine, on American bark "Fama." With A. L. Lovejoy, laid out originally the site of Portland; but on account of health removed in a schooner to the Straits of Fuca, and laid out Port Townsend.\*

Elbridge Trask.

Russell Osborn; probably arrived with Dick McCary, from the Rocky Mountains.

William Craig, also a Rocky Mountain man.

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\* "A. E. Wilson, Peter Foster, P. H. Hatch and F. W. Pettygrove also arrived this year (1842) and all proved to be beneficial acquisitions to the country. Mr. Pettygrove brought a small stock of goods with him."—Brown's "Political History of Oregon."

Francis W. Pettygrove was born at Calais, Me., 1812; was engaged in mercantile business; in 1842 accepted a consignment of goods to bring to Oregon for general trade, taking passage on the bark "Victoria" to the Hawaiian Islands; from which he came on the bark "Fama," Captain Nye, to Vancouver; took his goods to Oregon City by boat, established a store. In 1844 formed partnership with A. L. Lovejoy to establish a town at Portland; here built a store; went in 1851 by sea to the Straits, establishing Port Townsend.

In 1843 the only settler on the river below the falls was an old English sailor by the name of William Johnson [1839, on "Maryland" with John H. Couch], who resided upon a claim about a mile

Hudson's Bay Company's employees and agents:

1821.—Simon Plomondeau, settled in 1837 on Cowlitz Prairie; first actual settler in present limits of Washington.

1824 to 1828.—John Work, New Caledonia and upper Columbia; Connell, New Caledonia; Dease, New Caledonia, upper Columbia.

Francis Ermatinger, an Englishman, a jovial, hearty man; entered later into American life, becoming Treasurer under Provisional Government; employed largely in the Snake River and upper Columbia country.

Donald Manson, native of Scotland, came to Oregon with McLoughlin, 1824; served in New Caledonia; made his home finally at Champoege.

Pierre C. Pambrun, native of Paris, France;

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above the present city of Portland. He was a fine specimen of the British tar, and had at an early day abandoned his allegiance to the British lion and taken service on the old frigate "Constitution." I have frequently listened to his narratives of the action between the old "Ironsides" and the "Guerriere," on which occasion he served with the boarding party. He used to exhibit an ugly scar on his head, made in that memorable action by a British cutlass, and attributed his escape from death to the fact that he had a couple of pieces of hoop iron crossed in his cap, which turned the cutlass and saved his life.—J. W. Nesmith, 1875.

Ebbert (George Ward) followed the nomadic life of a trapper until 1833, when he came to the Willamette Valley and took up a claim near Champoege, and next year settled upon his present farm in Tualatin Plains, where he has since resided, and has maintained the reputation of a good citizen and honest man. The first square meal I ever ate west of the Rocky Mountains was at his humble but hospitable cabin, thirty-seven years ago.—Ibid.

commandant for many years until his death at Fort Walla Walla.

Archibald McKinley, Scotchman; stationed at Fort Langley; after death of Pambrun at Fort Walla Walla; engaged in business in Oregon City; made home in West Chehalem.

1830.—Geo. B. Roberts, clerk at Vancouver.

1831.—Duncan Finlayson, clerk at Vancouver; remained until 1837.

1832.—Geo. T. Allen, clerk; manager of farm at Vancouver, afterward detailed to Sandwich Islands as accountant; returned and lived at Cathlamet until his death.

John McLeod, sent to build Fort Umpqua, 1832.

Wm. McNeil; arrived as captain of American trading brig "Llama"; employed afterward as captain of steamer "Beaver."

1833.—William Fraser Tolmie, native of Inverness, Scotland; well educated physician; about 1841 was placed in charge of Puget Sound Agricultural Company.

1834.—William Glenn Rae, native of Orkney Islands; stationed in 1841 at San Francisco; died in 1846; a son-in-law of McLoughlin.

1839.—Four thousand acres of land on the Cowlitz was surveyed for an agricultural station.

1840.—Father Blanchet and Father Demers settled on land between Plomondeau and Puget Sound Agricultural Company's farm.

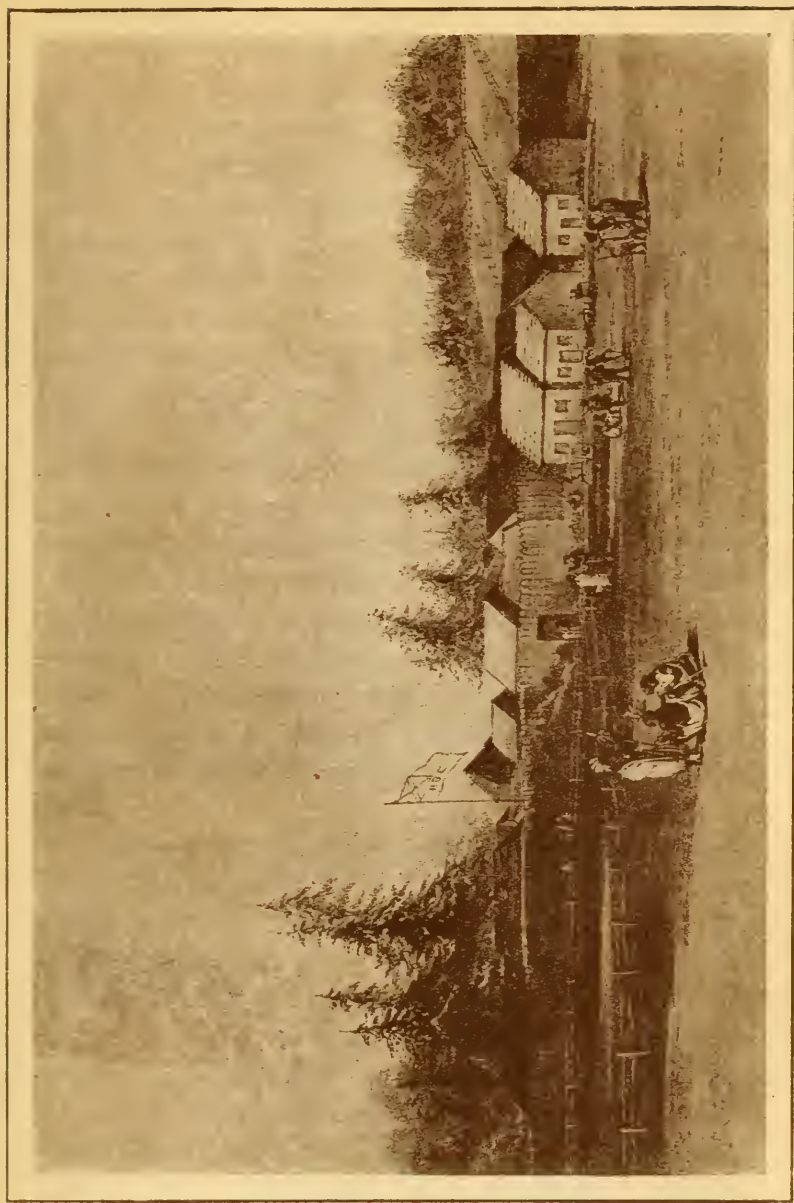
Dr. Forbes Barclay, a native of Shetland Islands, who had also served with Sir John Ross in the Arctic; well educated physician.

William McBean, stationed at Fort Walla Walla, after McKinley.

Grant, commandant at Fort Hall.

1812.—Montour, a character considered fabulous by Bancroft, but said to have made a settlement on French Prairie.

The Rocky Mountain men have been almost universally described as good fellows, brave and generous, and sincerely attached to their families. As said by one pioneer: "They were all a God-fearing class, and obtained their impressions mostly from nature." Their piety was no doubt of the frontier stamp, which did not forbid occasional profanity, nor imposed a very strict observance of the Sabbath; nor did it inhibit fighting in self-defense. But on the other hand there are few examples of greater hospitality and humanity than can be found in the lives of these men. The story of Phil. Thompson and his family would afford material for a romance. After trapping many years in the Rocky Mountains and marrying a native woman of the Snake Indians, he saw his oldest daughter beginning to grow up to womanhood, and concluded that he must follow the missionaries who had come into the Willamette Valley that the girl might be educated. He talked the matter over with his Indian wife, who perceived the



FORT VANCOUVER IN 1845

From an old print.





advantage of the child becoming a white woman; but could not bring herself to leave her country. She bade him and the girl a sad farewell, and Thompson set out, and after one day's journey made camp. In the morning the mother appeared to say good-bye again. Another day's march was made; but once more, as morning came, the Snake Indian mother was there to say good-bye. Thus continuing several days she finally gave up her tribe to follow her child; and in the Willamette Valley became known as one of the most careful of housewives. She tried to learn the white women's ways, and visited her white neighbors, noticing all the home arrangements and ways of cooking, washing, and keeping house, and introduced these at home, to please her husband, and that her children might grow up like white people. Mrs. Doty (Doughty), who was of the same Indian tribe, became a Baptist; but Mrs. Thompson died before the Baptist missionary reached the neighborhood.

A story is told of Thompson's buying a little slave girl, whom a party of Indians passing by had captured, and were mistreating. He called her Mary, and wished to bring her up as his own; but the little savage proved to be a genuine imp. She utterly refused to talk; the only words she was known to speak—at least until the family moved to California during the gold excitement—was when some mischief was found done, and Mrs. Thompson demanded sternly who performed it, and Mary answered

promptly, "Tecump"—referring to Thompson's little boy, Tecumseh.

1842.—Francis Xavier Matthieu, from Terrebonne, Canada; arrived in autumn.

In spring of the year came the following French Canadians: Gedereau Senecalle, Thomas Moison, Pierre Ganthier, Augustin Remon, Joseph Matte, and Francis Berthier.

A list has been taken from books of Matthieu, who for a number of years was in mercantile business at The Butte, or Butteville, and no doubt gives a considerable, if not complete list of Canadians living on French Prairie. It is as follows: Xavier Laderoute, Antoine Bonafante, Andre La Chapelle, Pierre Papin, Louis B. Vandalle, Jean B. Du Charme, Fabien Maloine, Luc Pagnon, Etienne Gregoire, Amable Arcouette, Pierre De Lord, Louis A. Vandalle, John Sanders, Pierre Pariseau, Charles Rondeau, David Donpierre, Andre Du Bois, Pierre Depot, Moyse Lor, Pierre Le Course, Joseph Bernabe, Baptiste Deguire, Adolphe Cahmberlaine, Jean Lingras Alexis Aubichon, Jean Servans, Michelle Laferte, Jean B. Dalcourse, Louis Osant, Jean B. Aubichon, Antoine Felice, Michel La Framboise, Joseph Gervais, Jean B. Panpin, Olivier Brisebois, Thomas Roa, Louis Boivers, Andre Langtain, Etienne Lucier, Alexis La Pratte, Pierre Belaque.

Of these, La Chapelle was known as the mighty blacksmith; La Framboise as a famous trader and

trapper captain, who found and took care of Hall J. Kelley in the midst of his sickness and difficulties in the mountains of southern Oregon; Depot, Gervais, Lucier, and Belaque, were noted as first settlers, and as afterward favorable to local government. Osant was also a noted trapper captain, making the journey to Sacramento Valley, often taking his wife and family on the horse or mule train.

In February of 1843, the Oregon community was greatly saddened by the accidental death at the Willamette Falls of Cornelius Rogers, his young wife, a daughter of David Leslie, and her sister; and Nathaniel Crocker. With Dr. White, W. W. Raymond, and an Indian crew, they were on the way to the mouth of the Columbia, the ladies intending to stop over at the falls. The river was high, and White was perhaps feeling apprehensive as they neared the landing place just above the falls, and the moment the canoe touched the log used as the landing leaped ashore; being in the stern this acted to shove the craft into the stream, by which it was caught and carried over the falls. Raymond was at the bow, and also jumped out with the line, but on attempting to draw in only swung the endangered craft more broadside to the overpowering current. Crocker, Rogers, the two ladies and two Indians were instantly drowned; one Indian came through the falls alive (as has been said). The loss cast a gloom over all, as all the drowned were most highly esteemed. Rogers, in particular, was a very prom-

ising man, well acquainted with Indian languages, and calculated to be of great use to the infant community. Dr. White's account of the accident is as follows:

“ . . . I received an urgent call to visit the mouth of the Columbia. I left at once in company with Nathaniel Crocker, Esq., Mr. Rogers (my interpreter), his lady, and her young sister (the females going only to the falls), with a crew of Indians, on our ill-fated expedition. We reached the falls at sunset, February 1st, and by reason of the water being higher than usual, in passing around a jutting, or projecting, rock, the canoe came up suddenly against a log constituting the landing, at which instant I stepped off, and in a moment the canoe was swept away, with all its precious cargo, over the falls of thirty-eight feet, three rods below. The shock was dreadful to this infant colony, and the loss was dreadful and irreparable to me, Mr. Rogers being more important to me than any one in the country; nor was there a more respectable and useful man in this colony. Nathaniel Crocker came in with me last fall from Tompkins County; he was much pleased with the country and its prospects, and the citizens were rejoiced at the arrival of such a man in this country; he was every day capacitated for usefulness. None of the bodies of the four whites or two Indians have been as yet found.”

Conditions in Oregon had become so far changed in reference to missionary work, in 1843, that the

Methodist Missionary Board in New York decided to make a change in management. The Mission of Richmond and Willson at Nisqually, and shortly afterward that under G. Hines, on the Umpqua, were discontinued. That on Clatsop Plains was conducted somewhat longer by Kone and Parrish, but as a missionary station, as well as that at the Dalles, under Daniel Lee and Perkins, which was subsequently sold to Dr. Whitman, was at length given up. The Missionary Board, prematurely perhaps, concluded that all the Oregon stations had ceased to be Indian missions, and that as American settlements, or preaching stations for the white settlers, they should no longer be supported by their missionary branch of the church, but be organized as ordinary circuits of the home field. Soon after this action was taken, July 19, 1843, a new superintendent, Rev. George Gary, of New York State, was appointed by Bishop Hedding, and in the autumn sailed from New York by Cape Horn for Oregon. He was well known as a man of ability and discretion, and upon arrival closed out the secular affairs of the mission. Jason Lee, hearing that an agent was to be appointed to visit Oregon and examine the affairs of his mission, decided to make a second trip East, anticipating if possible the departure of the agent, and explain fully the situation—as he thought the step premature. He took passage in the Hudson's Bay Company bark to the Hawaiian Islands, and thence by a schooner to Mexico. He visited Washington City and advised



with the President and cabinet as to the mission lands, and gave other information then much desired. Before the Board he made the definite claim that the Mission had been essential to the settlement in Oregon and by its supplies had saved the Americans "from succumbing to the Hudson's Bay Company." His course was not criticised and personally he was indorsed, being appointed "Missionary to Oregon"; but died at Stanstead the next year. His only child living, Lucy A., remained in Oregon, and was educated at Willamette Institute, of which she became preceptress.

CHAPTER IX

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WILLAMETTE

(*Continued*)

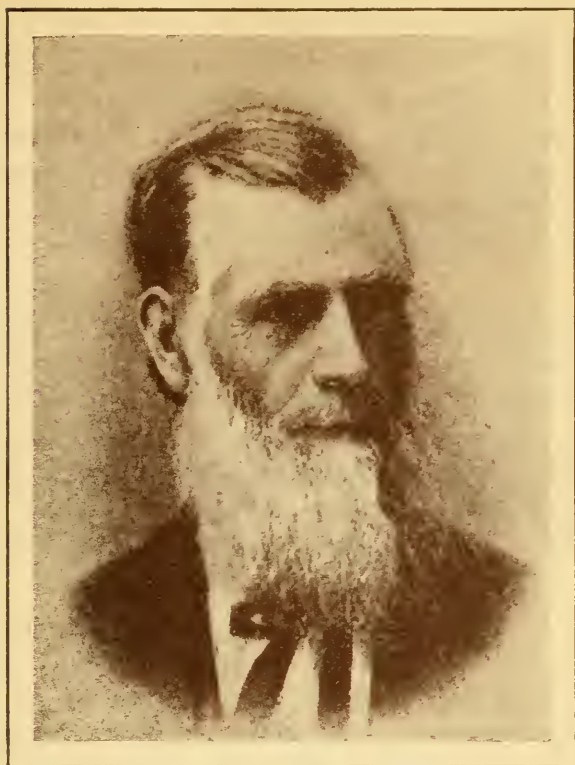


WITH the gradual, although still almost imperceptible, increase of population in Oregon, as illustrated in the preceding pages, the question of some sort of government could not be kept down. As became more and more evident, there were three growing parties in the diminutive settlement. One was that of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose employees, all told, on the Pacific Coast, have been estimated as over one thousand—twelve or thirteen hundred. These were under the very efficient government of the company itself, which was of military, or semi-military, character; and also had its officers of the peace, James Douglas, at Vancouver, being justice, and who were authorized to enforce the laws of Upper Canada throughout their territory.

There was in the second place, in order of time, and also of cohesion, the Methodist Mission party; who had their own church organization, and had a certain rather indefinite, but still creditable recognition by the Hudson's Bay Company. The members of the mission had their own steward, their own goods and credit, and some independent income from the missionary societies. This gave them a certain independence and sense of protection. The power was thus with the British Company; and a certain degree of recognition and standing, constituting a class with certain exclusive privileges, belonged to the members of the mission. To those not thus priv-

ileged this seemed to be a recognition that constituted an "Aristocracy"; or, at least, to the sensitive American heart, that dearly detested distinctions, it was easy to so construe the situation. The third party, then, was naturally created by the fact of the existence of the other two. The Hudson's Bay people having the power, and the Methodist missionaries the privileges; and the "people," felt themselves excluded. The popular party were thus composed of the old mountain men, free trappers, sailors and independent missionaries. To this number a strong addition was made in the autumn of 1842 of W. H. Gray, who resigned his place in the American Board Mission, and removed to the Willamette Valley. Rev. A. B. Smith, who had attempted a mission to the Nez Percés, resigned at the same time, and went to the Sandwich Islands.

These were, naturally, strictly local conditions, or the embryonic conditions of politics; such divisions always existing in every community; one party having the power, another privileges supported by the power, and the much larger body having neither power or privilege, except as they may be able to limit and regulate the other two. That the "power" was not very oppressive, or the "privileges" very great in the embryonic conditions in Oregon, did not make any less inevitable this division of feeling; which is at the base of the tripartite distinctions observed in most societies of the upper, middle, and lower classes. That there were wise and good and



WILLIAM H. GRAY

Oregon Pioneer of 1836.





friendly men among all the parties, and generous friendship between all classes; and that these embryonic class distinctions were not allowed to rise to animosity, or forcible contest, illustrates the intelligence and morality of the little Oregon community. The larger political question, whether the country should become British or American, was held in abeyance.

Congress had been memorialized three times by the Americans in Oregon. The first was carried by Jason Lee, and stated that while peaceable conditions were then existing, it could not be hoped that they would so remain if the British and American Governments should divide opinion, and the Indians be suffered, without an adequate authority in the Territory, to become partisans. The desirability of a speedy erection of some American authority was therefore strongly set forth. By the petition of 1840, it was represented to Congress that the petitioners were citizens of the United States; they had settled in Oregon, supposing this to be a portion of the public domain of the United States; but they were uninformed of any acts of this government extending American institutions and protection over them; in consequence of which themselves and families were exposed to be destroyed by the savages, and others who would do them harm. They represented that there was crime in the Territory, which should be suppressed; they called attention to acts of the British Government, showing its intention to hold the

country north of the Columbia, and representing that this section was necessary to the completeness of the Oregon Territory on account of its harbors, and was valuable on account of its timber, water powers, and minerals. After naming the desirable features of the section south of the Columbia, to the California line, they conclude: "And, although your petitioners do not undervalue considerations of this kind, yet they beg leave especially to call attention of Congress to their own condition as an infant colony, without military force or civil institutions to protect their lives and property and children, sanctuaries and tombs, from the hands of uncivilized and merciless savages around them. We respectfully ask for the civil institutions of the American Republic. We pray for the high privileges of American citizenship."

This was signed by David Leslie and others.

Later petitions indicated more particular grievances. In one it is stated that disagreements and misunderstandings as to property were already arising. Attention was called to the fact that the Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company was claiming two miles of the river front at the Willamette Falls; and that he was holding this not in person, but by employees of the Hudson's Bay Company; that he was also taking and holding agricultural lands in the same manner, one tract upon Tualatin Plains, and another on the Clackamas; and that he was employing Hudson's Bay Company servants to erect a mill

in competition with Americans at the Falls of the Willamette, and that with such means at his disposal independent efforts of Americans were futile. Mention was also made that articles calculated to enter into competition with the company's trade in Oregon were refused transportation in the company's ships from the Sandwich Islands. While as a State document these particulars seem rather trivial, it was evident that in an unsettled condition of affairs, and without any effective government control recognized by both British and Americans, and all residents, partisan difficulties would soon arise.

The allusions to the danger from Indians may seem rather overdrawn, as the Indians in the Willamette Valley were few and demoralized, and had for years been absolutely peaceable. Yet it was not unperceived by the Americans, even in the midst of such tranquillity, that the Indians did not as yet comprehend the results of settlement by the whites; nor was it doubtful that when the surrounding tribes, which numbered some of the best and bravest of fighters, did once awaken to the fact that native sovereignty was endangered, there would be a coalition of all the tribes. This created an uneasy, underground feeling, that might well make any thoughtful American hesitate about locating here a home for his wife, and attempting to rear a family of children in conditions that had the elements of great violence. This undercurrent of apprehension has been well expressed in an address of Hon. Elwood

Evans: " So long as no collision between the whites occurred the Indians might remain quiet. But any excitement indicating hostility between British and Americans, the tinder [the Indians] was in danger of ignition. . . . The Indian was ignorant, jealous, and perfidious to his enemies, real or supposed. The American settler came to stay, and appropriate the country to his use, and this of itself was all sufficient to provoke Indian enmity. It is equally true there existed an educated bias which had already made the Indian the dependent of a foreign element—there was also an educated bias which fostered hostility to the American settler."

It was wholly unknown to the American what move on the part of the British Government or the monopoly might cause a rupture with the Americans, or how many, if not all, of the Indian tribes might be affected. While from Dr. McLoughlin they had received nothing but protection and kindness, there was then no means of knowing his personal intentions, and whether he would be influenced by his company and government to undertake stringent measures to retain possession of a country they seemed to show no inclination to surrender. It was suspicious, in their memorial, to speak of others than the Indians, meaning the British Company, as likely to do them harm. But this was clearly within the region of possibility if an unorganized and unprotected condition was allowed to continue.

Judge Evans also drew a comparison between the

Puritans and the Oregon pioneers; saying: "Both were founders of commonwealths—both political agitators—both recognized the necessity of law and order to secure the well-being of the community. Before the Puritan fathers left the cabin of the 'Mayflower' they had signed their compact of government and selected their magistrates. Hardly had our pioneers selected a shelter from the inclemency of the season, when, true to their American instincts, they missed and at once desired to supply the protection afforded by civil institutions. Spurned and neglected by their government, they turned to themselves, to each other, and at once agitated the question of establishing a temporary government. . . . It is too well established to admit of cavil that some system of government is the very first requirement of a new settlement. This essentially American axiom found no exception in the pioneer element of Oregon; to secure order and peace was the first duty foremost among the duties of the citizens."

Tracing their acts he continues: "In 1838 the Americans prayed for civil institutions. In 1840 they eloquently lamented that they were without the protection which law secured. In 1841 they invited their fellow-citizens of foreign birth [British subjects] to join with them in forming a system of government. They were ready and willing to submit to rules and regulations prescribed by the people, though vastly in the minority. In 1842 the agitation steadily continued. In 1843, although they had in-



creased in numbers, and the time was approaching when they must outnumber their opponents, yet again they invited the co-operation of their foreign-born fellow-citizens." As an estimate of the work of the Oregon pioneers in establishing their own government he concludes: "From this testimony I am more than justified in pronouncing the Provisional Government of Oregon the crowning glory of the Oregon pioneers—a striking exhibit of their patient submissiveness when the American settlers were in the minority—of their magnanimity and conservatism when they were in the majority. We witness the difficulty and the jealousy which thwarted their plans, and how they overcame them. We must commend their pluck, endurance, tact; their sturdy republicanism displayed in their persistent effort to secure the 'consent of the governed.' "

Without speculating whether Oregon would have ever become an American Territory and State without the intermediary period of a government established by her own people, we may note briefly that it was by such a period that it actually came into the American Union, and with it has come possession of the most of the shore of the Pacific, and the leading control of the entire Pacific Ocean. The weapon with which the Oregon pioneers contended was but a slender branch of primary American ideas. In these they conquered. As indicated by Judge Evans, the leading or foremost of these used was that of "the consent of the governed." This principle,

theoretically true everywhere and for all men, becomes practically so only as there is found a body of men either so strong, or so wise, as to know how to apply it. The Americans in Oregon had the principle, and they believed that they could use it in the exigency in which they found themselves, and by means of it gain the security that they trembled to venture further along without having. This temporary, or local government, intended only to serve the purpose of general protection and civil intercourse, covered a period of but seven years, yet within that brief time was able to win to its support every white person living in the Territory. A minute, critical and constitutional study of this remarkable government, including its many enlightened acts, not only in providing for the public safety and defense, but in its liberal land laws, its provision for education, its prohibition of slavery, and its suppression of the evils of intemperance, and in its wise and tolerant provision for the scruples of the British subject, long after they had become a hopeless minority, should be treated in a volume by itself; and by some most learned legal authority. Here we can but trace the steps of the patient pioneers seeking how to take one step after another in the best way.

Having seen that their only hope of security lay in a local government while the question of proprietary rights was in course of diplomatic settlement, the Americans, strongly conscious of fundamental ideas, sought how they might gain the "consent"

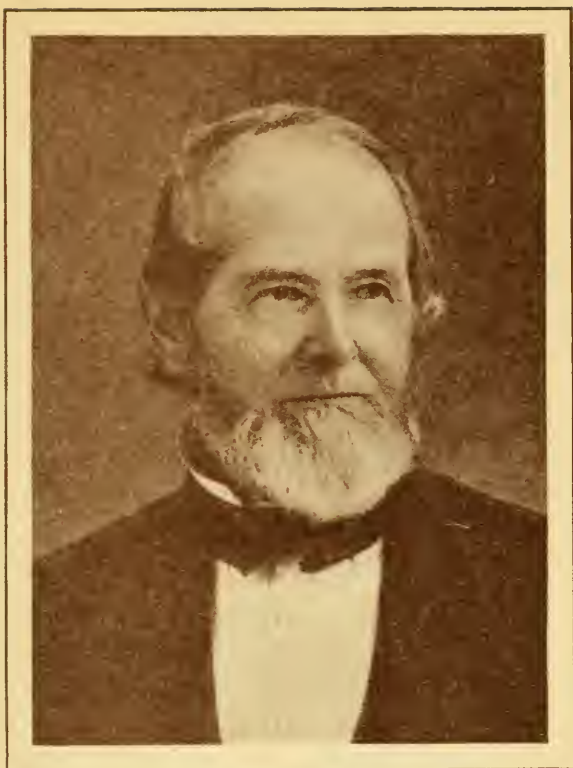
of those whom they must include in the government. This point, it has been related by Rev. J. S. Griffin, was dwelt upon in conversations with officers of the Wilkes' Expedition, while these were here in 1841. It was advised by them that no government could be recognized unless it had the general support of all residents; but if so established, although not strictly regular according to Legitimist ideas, it would command some support as a government in fact.

Two comparatively independent movements seem to have been in progress during the winter of 1842-43, looking toward a temporary government. One of these was a series of discussions held at the public debating society, formed among the men residing at the Willamette Falls, or Oregon City. This was attended by Abernethy, Hastings, Dr. McLoughlin, and others; and was by no means an insignificant arena for skillful discussion. The question of forming a Provisional Government was among those debated. Hastings, although an American, was the attorney of McLoughlin, and presented a resolution that it "was expedient for the settlers on the coast to establish an Independent Government." In the discussion this was favored by McLoughlin; and being put to a vote the resolution was carried. Abernethy, who opposed the resolution, was not satisfied that McLoughlin meant, so far as public discussion might affect action, to do more than aim at an impossible object, which it would be outside of the power, either legally or by sufficiency of strength, for Oregon set-

tlers to realize. He saw perfectly, which some of those present did not seem to see, that no government that did not recognize the superior national rights in some way, would be suffered by either the United States or Great Britain. It is possible that McLoughlin was simply intending to flatter the settlers with an effort that he knew would be promptly suppressed if attempted; or it may be that he had in mind some locally independent government, whose autonomy should be guaranteed by Great Britain. But either one was seen by Abernethy as entirely hostile to American ideas and interests in Oregon. He then offered as a subject for discussion at the next week's meeting a resolution, "That if the United States extends its jurisdiction over this country within the next four years, it will not be expedient to form an Independent Government." At this meeting, the political bearings of which began to be seen, there was a large attendance; and the difference between an independent government and a provisional government, to terminate when the boundary question was settled, seems to have been gone over thoroughly. It was certainly an interesting debate; the great and magnetic McLoughlin against the small and plain Abernethy; but the American leaning of the audience was developed; Abernethy and the United States won the decision. No record of the arguments seems to have been kept, but these are to be inferred from the decision.

While the Oregon City lawyer and merchant were

taking up the subject in a theoretical way, the Americans of French Prairie were trying to discover some method by which the actual settlers could be interested. Only as some very apparent need could be set forth would all parties be brought together. As the winter wore along, very fortunately a specific function of government, or at least of concerted community action, became apparent. The wild animals were becoming very troublesome about the ranches and ranges in catching the calves and colts and sheep that were now the main wealth. It became a subject that those favoring a provisional government could easily use. As has been noted by a writer on the subject. "The design indicated on the face of the notices was certainly a very laudable one, which was sure to be approved by the principal stock owners, then known to be the missionaries and the Hudson's Bay Company. These were believed not to approve the organization of a provisional government, but the extirpation of wild animals was an object to which they gave an encouraging word and to which they promised to contribute their money." The fact, moreover, that here was a function of government affecting the welfare of almost every settler, but had been overlooked by the existing authorities. whatever they were, was a striking proof that the "moral sense of the community" was not sufficient for the needs of the people. It could be said, "Look here, your Hudson's Bay Company, and your Methodist Mission, are not sufficient to protect even your pens



**GEORGE ABERNETHY**

Provisional Governor of Oregon from 1845 to 1849.





and roosts; let's organize to look after the wild cats and timber wolves."

Those who issued the notices of the meeting had an ulterior object in view, but knew that in order to obtain the consent of the governed, they must find agreement on a concrete proposition first. The move was strongly political, or politic, but it was strictly within the range of legitimate politics, which has for its object to focalize and determine public sentiment. Notice was posted that a meeting would be held at the Oregon Institute, established the previous summer, and of which more will be told in the proper place. The meeting was thus regularly called and organized, electing Dr. Ira L. Babcock, the quondam judge, as chairman of the meeting. This was February 2, 1843. After discussion it was decided to appoint a committee of six to consider the subject of protecting the herds, and report at a general meeting to be held first Monday in March next, at the house of Joseph Gervais. Ample time was thus given for word to be carried over the settlements, and as stated, a large majority of the settlers realized that something more than moral sense was necessary to take care of the wild animals, and nearly all were ready to participate in the "Wolf Meeting," as it was called. There was something a little catchy and attractive about this designation; so easily comprehended, and yet with a lurking suggestion of further possibilities. Hon. John Minto has noticed a parallel between the beginnings of govern-

ment on the banks of the Willamette and on the banks of the Tiber, in each of which the Wolf seems to have figured somewhat prominently; and draws the conclusion that probably all organized government began in the effort of men discarding the hunter stage of society to control the wild beasts dangerous to the flocks. We may also remember the picture of prehistoric men contending in large numbers with the mastodon, and that in the caves of Ireland the bones of extinct carnivores of gigantic size are found along with the remains of cave-dwelling men; and that the kings of Assyria, far down within the period of recorded history, claimed it as their special prerogative to kill lions.

The meeting held at the house of Joseph Gervais was characterized by great personal kindness and harmonious action. The American programme was carried through with perfect success. James A. O'Neil, who will be remembered as a member of Wyeth's party of 1834, was told of the ulterior object of the meetings, and being favorable to making this effort at self-protection permanent, was willing to act as chairman. He was elected, and expedited the business in hand. Ample protection was provided for the domestic stock, and the object of the meeting seemed to have been attained. But the ulterior object now appeared, and the persons favorable to establishing a local authority showed their purpose. W. H. Gray, recently come to the settlement from the

upper country mission, broached the subject of protection for themselves. Taking as his theme the provisions just made, he argued for similar provisions for the people. He said that no one would question for a moment that what had just been done was right; "this was just and natural protection for our property," and continued: "But how is it with you and me, and our wives and children? Have we any organization upon which we can rely for mutual protection? Is there any power or influence in the country sufficient to protect us and all that we hold dear from the worse than wild beasts? Who in our midst is authorized to call us together to protect our own and the lives of our families? True, the alarm may be given, as in a recent case, and we may run who feel alarmed, and shoot off our guns, while our enemy may be robbing our property, ravishing our wives, and burning the houses over our defenseless families. Common sense, prudence, and justice to ourselves and families demand that we act consistent with the principles that we have commenced. We have mutually and unitedly agreed to defend and protect our domestic animals; now, fellow-citizens, I submit and move the adoption of the two following resolutions, that we may have protection for our persons and lives, as well as for our cattle and herds: Resolved, that a committee be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of taking measures for the civil and military protection of this colony; and Re-

solved, that the said committee consist of twelve persons.”\*  
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The resolutions were adopted by unanimous vote, and the committee was appointed.†

This apparent unanimity was met, however, with great diversity of opinion in the settlement. At least five public meetings were held at different points preparatory to a general meeting, which was within the province of the committee of twelve to call and appoint the place of meeting; and numerous private discussions were carried on in all parts of the settlements. The first public meeting was at Willamette Falls, by the committee of twelve, to which the most of the people of the place were invited and in which they also participated. Dr. White of the committee was chosen chairman, and G. W. Le Breton was chosen secretary. In the discussion that followed both Jason Lee and George Abernethy took a very conservative view. They considered the measure as proposed unwise, and a government unnecessary, or more probably as a premature step just yet. Lee had been extremely urgent to secure the extension of United States authority over Oregon,

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\* The following appreciative notice of Gray has been made by H. W. Scott (address at unveiling of the Champoege monument): “One of the most active, earnest and forceful of the men who helped to carry the day, May 2, 1843, was William H. Gray, who came with Whitman in 1836. He is one distinctly to be named among the fathers of Oregon.”

† The Committee of Twelve consisted of Doctor Babcock, Dr. White, Messrs. O’Neil, Newell, Shortess, Lucier, Gervais, Hubbard, McRoy, Gay, Smith and Gray.

and no doubt believed that erection of a temporary authority would rather act to diminish the urgency of such extension; if the infant settlement could protect itself this weakened the argument that it needed protection of the United States Government. Abernethy apparently feared that erection of a provisional government would tend toward the idea of an independent government, such as was favored by McLoughlin, and that with so small a body of Americans it might be controlled in British interests. Dr. White was supposed to favor the provisional idea, but his enemies said that it was with the idea of his own personal preferment, and that in addition to being sub-Indian agent he wished to be governor. This was obnoxious to some present, and finding that the form of government would be beset with difficulties, the promoters of the plan wisely cut short premature deliberations, and appointed a general meeting to be held at Champoeg, May 2d, of the same year, 1843. This committee meeting was about March 10th. Ample time was thus given for all sides to be heard, and to make plans for determining the wishes of the community. As hope of success had required that the first movements be somewhat secret, the point now was to make discussion as open and general as possible, and to this the promoters of the local government addressed themselves.

Probably the most active man on this side was Le Breton. He may have had political aspirations of his own; but whatever his object he showed great



adroitness and capacity both for reserve and action. His own preferences he still held under cover and made it his business to discover what both or all parties were thinking and doing. He was a Catholic by education, and, with a French name and probably ancestry, he found admittance to the counsels of those opposing as well as favoring the organization.

As to those opposed, there were evidently two courses open for them: One, to refuse entirely to participate in the meeting that might be held, and then to say that such meeting, if held, had no representative character; and the other to be present in large numbers and vote the proposition down, and then still more triumphantly say that the community was opposed to a local government. Le Breton found that the latter course would be adopted. This was the bolder and more conclusive step, and showed that the opposition believed themselves in the majority. It also showed a willingness, thus far, to learn and abide by the decision of the people, on the American principle that the votes and wishes of all were to be held as equal. Government by the consent of the governed and majority rule were thus early (in the proceedings) recognized by even the Canadian and British elements, and the Hudson's Bay factors and the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church were here brought to the point of accepting political equality with their own servants and the American squatter. Four meetings were held by the opposition; one at Vancouver, one at the Falls, and two at the Catholic

Church at St. Paul, near Champoeg. These meetings, particularly at St. Paul Church, were the first steps taken by the Canadians in popular government; for, at that time, they were under an authority which had never consulted them in its measures; nor had any considerable measure of independent government been won at that time in Canada. These settlers had all come to Oregon before the days of Papineau. That these meetings at the church were principally merely a preparatory drill how to vote at the big meeting does not invalidate the fact that they had now placed before them definitely for their own choice the form of government they were to accept. They very naturally would look to their superiors in information and authority for guidance. But they all were made to feel for the first time that they had a hand in government.

A document which has a very singular style, from having evidently been composed in French or German, and then inexpertly translated into English, was circulated and signed by the French residents. It was entitled, "Address of the Canadian citizens of Oregon to the meeting at Champoeg, March 4, 1843." The date shows that it was prepared in anticipation of a meeting which was not held; nor, so far as appears, ever appointed.

Asserting themselves as Canadian citizens and that they take the opportunity to express their views to the Americans on a government for Oregon: First, that they wished for good regulations; second,

they would not object to the rules of the first local government, though not liking all of them, but wished those officers (?) to serve out their term; third, they would no longer petition the United States until the frontier of the United States be established; fourth, they opposed the regulations anticipated as to lands; fifth, they did not wish a provisional government, as it opened the way to self-interest, making useless officers; nor were the people supplied with men of education suitable for carrying on government. The common people were not fit for self-government; that was a matter for lawyers and the educated classes.

Sixth, in lieu of a government with its multitude of officers, they would favor a simple council, to act as parliament, or jury; seventh, to be elected from all parts, but to locate a president and justice in each county, by whom causes might be tried, with appeal to the central council [How long this council, or senate, or parliament was to serve, or who were to be electors, is not suggested. But this would point again to McLoughlin's idea of a colony locally independent, but under the guaranty of some power like England]; eighth, these members of the council should be influenced by mere love of doing good, and not by hope of gain, and be above suspicion of self-interest; ninth, the council should especially avoid oppressive taxation; tenth, they wished no militia; eleventh, they considered the country as free to all, even Spanish and French as well as English and Americans; twelfth, they assert themselves as Eng-

lish subjects, and claim their freedom as such; thirteenth, still they would submit to any lawful government; fourteenth, they again deplore unnecessary laws; fifteenth, they deplore fraudulent trials; sixteenth, caution against multiplication of offices; and seventeenth, express the desire for “prosperity, liberty, and peace.”

The document is as follows:

“We, the Canadian citizens of Wallamet, considering with interest and reflection the subject which unites the people at the present meeting, present to the American citizens, and particularly to the gentlemen who called said meeting, the unanimous expression of our sentiments of cordiality, and desire of union and inexhaustible peace between all people, in view of our duty and the interest of the new colony, and declare—

“1st. That we wish for laws, or regulations, for the welfare of our persons, and the security of our property and labors.

“2d. That we do not intend to rebel against the measures of the kind taken last year, by a party of the people; although we do not approve of certain regulations, nor certain modes of laws; let those magistrates finish their time.

“3d. That we will not address a new petition to the government of the United States, because we have our reasons, and until the line be decided, and the frontiers of the States be fixed.

“4th. That we are opposed to the regulations an-

anticipated, and exposed to the consequences for the quantity, direction, etc., of lands, and whatever expense for the same lands, because we have no direct guaranty for the government to come; and perhaps to-morrow all these measures may be broken.

“ 5th. That we do not wish a provisional mode of government—too self-interested, and full of degrees, useless to our power, and overloading the colony instead of improving it; besides men of laws and science are too scarce, and have too much to do in a new country.

“ 6th. That we wish either the mode of senate, or council, to judge the difficulties, punish the crimes (except capital offenses) and make the regulations suitable for the people.

“ 7th. The same council be elected and composed of members from all parts of the country, and should act in a body, on the plan of civilized countries in parliament, or as a jury; and to be represented, for example, by the president of said council, and another member as judge of peace, in each county; allowing the principle of recalling to the whole senate.

“ 8th. That the members should be influenced to interest themselves to their own welfare, and that of the public, by the love of doing good, rather than by the hope of gain, in order to take off from the esteem of the people all suspicions of interest in the persons of their representatives.

“ 9th. That they must avoid every law loading and inexpedient to the people, especially to the new ar-

rivals. Unnecessary taxes, and whatever records are of that kind, we do not want them.

“ 10th. That the militia is useless at present, and rather a danger of bad suspicion to the Indians and a delay for the necessary labors; at the same time it is a load; we do not want it, either, at the present time.

“ 11th. That we consider the country free, at present, to all nations, till government shall have decided; open to every individual wishing to settle, without any distinction of origin, and without asking him anything, either to become an English, Spanish, or American citizen.

“ 12th. So we, English subjects, proclaim to be free, as well as those who came from France, California, United States, or even natives of this country; and we desire unison with all the respectable citizens in this country; or we ask to be recognized as free among ourselves, to make such regulations as appear suitable to our wants, save the general interest of having justice from all strangers who might injure us, and that our reasonable customs and pretensions be respected.

“ 13th. That we are willing to submit to any lawful government when it comes.

“ 14th. That we do not forget that we must make laws for necessary circumstances. The more laws there are, the more opportunity for roguery for those who make a practice of it; and, perhaps, the more alterations there will be some day.



“ 15th. That we do not forget in a trial that before all fraud on fulfilling of some points of the law, the ordinary proofs of the certainty of the fact ought to be duly weighed, so that justice may be done, and no chance be given for fraud.

“ 16th. In a new country the more men employed and paid by the public, the less remains of industry.

“ 17th. That no one can be more desirous than we for the prosperity, ameliorations, and general peace of the country, and especially for guaranty of our rights and liberties; and such is our wish for all who are, or may become, our fellow countrymen, etc., for long years of peace.”

Those favoring the provisional government were equally active, but reserved their forces for the meeting, which, on March 10th, at the Falls, was appointed for Champoeg, May 2d. On Tualatin Plains, J. S. Griffin took especially pains to see all the settlers, urging their attendance at Champoeg, and explaining to the people recently from the Red River country and Nisqually that under a provisional government, to be followed by American occupation, they would be entitled to hold their lands in fee simple; while under British law the country would probably go to the Hudson's Bay Company. The Rocky Mountain men were constitutionally opposed to the monopoly, and favorable to self-government. A leader among these was Jos. L. Meek, a Rocky Mountain man, long since famed in both literature and art, as well as in fireside tales. Shortess, Edmunds (Pickernel), and

others who made homes on the lower Columbia, and Smith and other residents of Chehalem Valley were also there. No more useful man, nor one more necessary to the success of the American movement, was to be found than F. X. Matthieu, who arrived from the Sioux country the preceding autumn; a Canadian, but one of the patriots. Educated under a Republican teacher, and a follower of Papineau, and one who had seen men tied back to back and hanged for an effort to gain from England what was afterward allowed as just, he here found once more the chance to advance American conceptions of human rights, and used it fully. He was living with Etienne Lucier, and found that, like most of the Canadians, this earliest settler was much afraid of excessive taxation; and thought that the more law and lawyers and officers, the less would be left for the producer. He had been told that it was customary in the United States to place a tax upon windows, and feared that even his poor piece of buckskin between the logs of his house might be thus plastered over with oppressive burdens. Matthieu was able to relieve him of these fears, and had him so well settled in favor of a provisional government that he voted with the Americans through thick and thin. As it proved this vote was necessary to organization at that time.

When the day arrived both Americans and Canadians were on hand; the latter apparently in larger numbers.

Champoeg was a point of high bottom land, pic-

turesquely diversified by the water-loving trees, such as willows, maple, and cottonwood. Against this point the full force of the Willamette River was directed, with the consequence that the shore was worn so as to impend with bold front over very deep water. For this reason it was a favorite haunt of the Indians, where they performed remarkable feats of diving and swimming. Being also a place about midway between the upper and the lower tribes of the western Oregon Indians it was invested with its own traditions as a council ground of the tribes, and was a favorite scene of the weddings as solemnized with much formality between members of the friendly native nations. Its selection as the place for the proposed meeting to consider the formation of a temporary government was owing to its convenience to the settlement of the Canadians, who probably would not take the pains to go any great distance from home. It was thus in the nature of a friendly overture on the part of the Americans, and indicated that they were willing to go more than half way to meet their neighbors owning a British allegiance.

The meeting was at a small house on the river bank, but as there was not sufficient room within, was held outside. Some irregularity as to organizing seems to have been met, and it was reported to the Americans that all the Canadians had been instructed to vote " No " upon all motions. Before permanent organization it was therefore deemed advisable to put a number of motions upon which the Cana-

dians should vote "Yes," if consistent; and thus, without risk, to find the actual strength of the two parties. According to the minutes the report of the committee was read, and a motion to adopt [probably as a whole] was lost. What other motions were made is not recorded; but the minutes state that considerable confusion existed in consequence. It has been said by Griffin that he engaged Bishop Blanchet, who was present, in debate at this juncture, with the view of committing him and his party to actual participation in the meeting. From the votes, and the grouping of voters, Le Breton now considered that the Americans were in a majority. He had scarcely stated this—"We can risk it; let us divide and count"—before Gray seconded the motion, and Meek called out in his ringing voice, "Who's for a divide?" and added, "All for the report of the committee and an organization, follow me!"

The primitive method of voting, known among the people of the West and on the Plains, was observed. Following the tall form of Meek, then a man in his strength, and a model of physical symmetry, the Americans quickly took their places on one side, and the Canadians on the other. The vote was so close as to require a count in detail. Gray and Le Breton passing the lines counted for the opposition fifty good men; and on the side for a government, fifty-two good men; Matthieu and Lucier being among those for the organization. Then Meek swung his hat and shouted, "Three cheers for our side," which were

given with a will from throats that had sounded the battle call in many a frontier fight, or the "gee" and "haw" to many a yoke of oxen; and the hurrahs were echoed back and forth across the Willamette. The Indians, who had assembled in large numbers, witnessed the triumph of the Bostons; and the greater part of the Canadians immediately withdrew, and disclaimed all connection with the meeting.\*

Those favorable to a government, although having but a partial victory, saw that the next thing to gain all the people was to proceed and organize. On motion the offices of judge, clerk, sheriff, treasurer, three magistrates, three constables, a major and three captains, and a committee of nine for drafting a code of laws, were to be provided by election. A. E. Wilson was chosen judge; G. W. Le Breton, clerk; J. L. Meek, sheriff; W. H. Willson, treasurer; Burns, Judson, Smith and Compo, were chosen magistrates;

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\* The following is a list of the fifty-two who voted for the organization of the Provisional Government, May 2, 1843: Dr. Ira L. Babcock, Dr. W. H. Willson, G. W. LeBreton, W. H. Gray, Joseph L. Meek, David Hill, Robert Shortess, Dr. Robert Newell, Reuben Lewis, Amos Cook, Caleb Wilkins, Hugh Burns, Francis Fletcher, Sidney W. Smith, Alanson Beers, T. J. Hubbard, James O'Neil, Robert Moore, W. P. Doughty, L. H. Judson, A. T. Smith, J. C. Bridges, Rev. Gustavus Hines, Rev. David Leslie, John Howard, William McCarty, Charles McKay, Rev. J. S. Griffin, George Gay, George W. Ebberts, Rev. J. L. Parrish, Rev. Harvey Clarke, Charles Campo, Dr. W. J. Bailey, Allen Davy, Joseph Holman, John (Edmunds) Pickernel, Joseph Gale, Russell Osborn, David Weston, William Johnson, Webley Hauxhurst, William Cannon, Medorem Crawford, John L. Morrison, P. M. Armstrong, Calvin Tibbetts, J. R. Robb, Solomon Smith, A. E. Wilson, F. X. Matthieu, Etienne Lucier.—Compiled by Geo. H. Himes, with assistance of F. X. Matthieu.



DR. W. H. WILLSON  
One of the founders of Salem.





Ebberts, Bridges, Smith and Matthieu, constables; John Howard, major; McCarty, McRoy, and S. Smith, captains. The Legislative Committee consisted of Hill, Shortess, Newell, Beers, Hubbard, Gray, O'Neil, Moore and Doughty.

The compensation of the Legislative Committee was fixed at the modest sum of \$1.25 per day each, which was at once subscribed by the members of the committee; and Babcock and Parrish immediately engaged to provide for the board of committee when it should meet—the session being fixed not to exceed six days. The committee was to report at Champoege July 5th, following. The committee accepted the invitation of the Methodist Mission to use their granary, at Oregon City, for their sittings, and in this unpretentious structure they held sessions, beginning on May 10th. This committee continued its sessions two days, each session being opened with prayer; and adjourned to meet again the last Thursday in June. The question of greatest difficulty was as to the executive. The very same difficulty that met the first American government was encountered again here in Oregon. The co-operation of the Methodist Mission was felt to be essential, but it would be impossible to elect a governor from the mission at that time. Hence it was decided to have an Executive Committee of three.

At the meeting assembled at Champoege July 5th, the report of the committee was strongly combated on this point. Babcock being absent, Gustavus Hines

was chosen chairman, and in the debate characterized the Executive Committee as a hydra-headed monster, a new Roman Triumvirate; Jason Lee considered this an extreme comparison, and believed that if a government were desired some sort of executive head must be provided. Dr. Babcock—although apparently not present—had expressed his views as against the Executive Committee, and considered that the Legislative Committee had exceeded its powers in proposing it, and that with such an executive, or perhaps with any executive, the movement looked too much like an independent government; whereas the intention was for (but) a temporary government. Gray, however, closed the argument, justifying the committee, and concluding that in their circumstances the actual settlers, not connected with either the Hudson's Bay Company or the Mission, wanted a real government, and without an executive this was impossible. The report was then carried with but few dissenting votes; and Beers, Hill, and Gale were elected Executive Committee.

A code of laws was forthwith adopted, having the following preamble: "We, the people of Oregon Territory, for the purpose of mutual protection, and to secure peace and prosperity among ourselves, agree to adopt the following laws and regulations, until such time as the United States extend their jurisdiction over us." That Oregon was thus pre-empted for the American Union was distinctly set forth by the organizers of this government. At this meeting

some of the Canadians, besides Matthieu, participated; but a communication from the Hudson's Bay Company stated briefly that they were not included, as they " had no need of protection " other than that already provided by themselves. Indeed it must have seemed almost preposterous to the officials of that company that the little Oregon community, which had been dependent on them even for clothing and groceries, should now offer to extend their " protection " over their own magnificent organization. But time wrought rapidly.

The ordinance of 1787 prohibiting slavery was adopted; any person, without reference to nationality, might acquire by simple occupation a square mile of land, but not at a town site or water privilege; but an exception evidently in favor of the Methodist Mission allowed not over six miles square to a religious body having taken a claim prior to the act.

A detailed study of the changes made in 1844, and again in 1845, cannot be given here; but as this government greatly affected Dr. McLoughlin and his relation to his own company, a portion of his description of the situation will be inserted at the proper place.

In a valuable address prepared by Hon. H. W. Scott, for the unveiling of the Champoeg Monument, May 2, 1901, is given a summary of this government, which is inserted with as little abridgment as possible. After noticing the object of the assemblage, that " We are here to-day to commemorate an event

that took place on this spot eight and fifty years ago"; and that this "was the birth of the first American Commonwealth, the organization of the first American government on the Pacific Coast of the United States of America," Mr. Scott proceeds to treat of the movement as beginning in international competition, yet conducted with a wise concern for co-operation between the respective elements.

The following is a condensation of the address:

"Oregon was much more distant from the Atlantic States in time, and far more difficult to be reached, than America was from Europe when the settlement of the American continent began. The migration across the continent of America was, indeed, the most extraordinary of migratory movements since the date of authentic history. From the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi River it was a movement by comparatively short and easy stages; from the Mississippi westward it was a single leap. The slender column pushed its way over plains and mountains, through hostile native tribes and arid wilderness—the first parties requiring more than a year for the journey; the later ones, as the routes were better known, not less than six months. . . . Nearer to us than Jamestown and Plymouth is the heroic age. . . . But it is the Provisional Government that is our theme. . . . At the outset I shall quote a remark made by a citizen of honored memory, Judge William Strong, who, in an address before the Pio-

neer Society of Oregon in 1879, said: ' Oregon owes by far the most of its prosperity and rapid progress to the early formation of the Provisional Government, the wise laws which were enacted, and the inflexible justice with which they were administered.'

" In pioneer days in Oregon, as elsewhere in America, the beginning of settlement was followed almost immediately by organization of government. The instinct of the race to which we belong to establish civil institutions and to organize government under regular forms of law, was manifest here before there were so many as one hundred persons of American nativity in the whole country west of the Rocky Mountains. Joint occupation of the country by British subjects, and by people from the United States, each party hoping to hold the Pacific Northwest for its own country, hastened action while the inhabitants were yet very few. Such, however, was the vigor and activity of the Americans that, though they were at first inferior in numbers, they soon gained the ascendant, and, rapidly reënforced during the years that followed, they had fully established civil government in Oregon long before the question of national jurisdiction was finally settled between the United States and Great Britain.

" This first effort to establish a government here was rooted in this international competition. . . . From the transfer of Astoria in 1813 down to the arrival of the American settlers—down indeed to the year 1840—the English influence was decidedly in



the ascendant. Preponderance of the Americans was slowly gained. The very first movement of the American settlers was in 1840. . . . It contained an allusion to the conflict with British interests here as a reason why the United States should take speedy action.

“As American influence increased, our pioneers became constantly more active and urgent for the formation of a government. . . . We had three classes of Americans in the Oregon country: First, American trappers, or mountain men, who were hostile to the Hudson’s Bay Company, and strongly attached to the United States; second, the American missionaries, who were already attached to the institutions of their own country, which were bound up with religious freedom; third, American settlers, who had come to make homes and cultivate the soil. But the whole population in 1842 was not more than 137.”

From this exposition of conditions Mr. Scott enumerates the successive steps culminating in the formation of the government desired.

“On the 7th of February, 1841, a meeting of some of the inhabitants was held at Champoege, then the center, or seat of the principal settlement ‘for the purpose of consulting upon the steps necessary to be taken for the formation of laws, and the election of officers to execute them.’ The call was cautiously worded, so as to avoid the troublesome question of national sovereignty; for the Americans, who were

making this initiatory movement, thought it prudent not to go too fast, realizing that the people of the country, though divided in their allegiance, yet had to live together. . . . Thus there were two sentiments—one American, the other British; and as the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company was well established before the Americans came, the latter were looked upon as intruders—though in fact Great Britain never made a serious or definite claim to that part of Oregon lying south of the Columbia River. At this first meeting there was nothing done beyond advising the selection of a committee for the purpose of drafting a code of laws for the government of the country. But an event soon occurred that hastened action. This was the death of Ewing Young"—[whose antecedents and services are noticed at length]. "From that time [1834] until his death in February, 1841, his name has a conspicuous place in the pioneer life of Oregon. He left considerable property, to which there were no legal claimants or known heirs; and as there was no probate court, the administration of the property became a perplexing question. Most of the American settlers were present at the funeral, and after the burial service the discussion turned upon the necessity of civil government. So a meeting was organized on the spot. . . . A committee of seven was likewise recommended, whose business it should be to draft a code of laws for the settlements south of the Columbia River. . . . It will be seen from these names [as inserted]

that there was an attempt at co-operation among the different elements of population then in Oregon. Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries, subjects of Great Britain and citizens of the United States, were associated on the committee. . . . On the 18th day of February the meeting was adjourned to meet on the first Tuesday in June 'at the new building, near the Catholic Church.' At this second meeting it was reported that no proceedings had been taken meantime by the committee appointed to draft a constitution and a code of laws, and adjournment was taken 'to the American Mission House, on the first Tuesday in October, 1841.' This was the end of the first effort. Neither committee nor assembly met again. As might have been expected, political and ecclesiastical jealousies began to arise. . . .

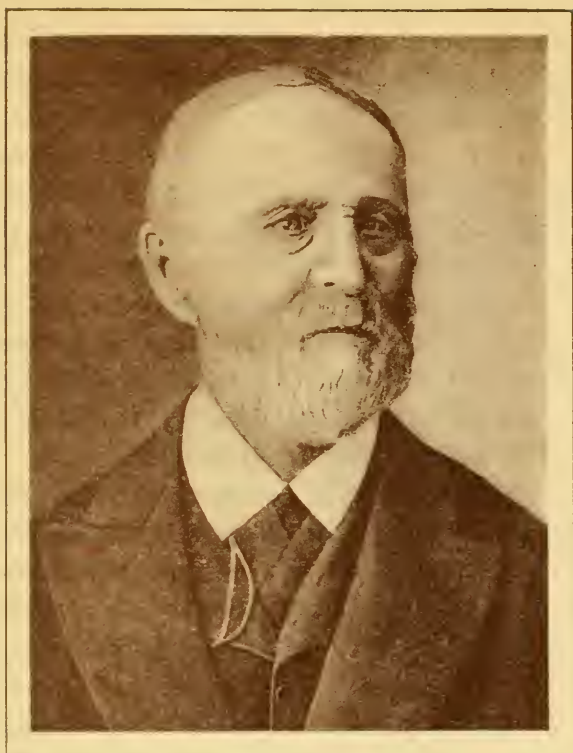
“ During the next two years the project of local government remained quiet; but the number of Americans was increasing. . . . Early in 1843 the project of a Provisional Government was started again. This second attempt was taken partly under cover of a utilitarian scheme. Beasts of prey—bears, panthers, wolves—were very numerous, and the settlers suffered great losses through depredations upon their flocks and herds. A preliminary meeting was held at the Oregon Institute, February 2, 1843, at which it was moved that a general meeting be called on the first Monday in March at the house of Joseph Gervais, a Hudson's Bay pioneer,

whose name is perpetuated in the town of Gervais, Marion County. At this meeting, held at the appointed time, measures were taken for concert in destruction of noxious animals; and following this a committee of twelve was appointed to 'consider measures for the civil and military protection of this colony.' The names [as inserted] sufficiently show the preponderance of men of United States nativity.

"But the question whether the new organization was to be based on acknowledged allegiance to the United States or not, instantly came uppermost [the address of the Canadians is here noticed]. . . . This was signed by men proclaiming themselves 'English subjects,' numbering about fifty. It was 'laid aside for the present,' as the business of the meeting was understood to have been completed by the appointment of the committee of twelve, which was to develop a plan of organization.

"This committee was to report at a general meeting, called to assemble at Champoeg, May 2, 1843. On the appointed day about an equal number of American citizens and British subjects came together in mass meeting, and it was announced that the report of the committee of twelve was ready. Dr. Babcock took the chair, and the report of the committee was read. From the composition of the committee it was not doubted that it would report in favor of political organization, to continue in force until the United States should establish a territorial government. Such the report proved to be. The subjects

of Great Britain could not be expected to participate and acquiesce, for such action on their part would have amounted to renunciation of their allegiance to Great Britain and consent to the American claim of sovereignty. So when the motion was put that the report be adopted, there was a division on national lines; and so close was it that the chairman was unable to decide which party had the majority. Then Joseph L. Meek, one of our sturdy pioneers, a native of Virginia, who had come West in a spirit of boyish adventure, and had passed many years on the plains and among the mountains, sprang to his feet and called for a division. Appealing to the Americans, he exclaimed in his impetuous way, 'Who's for a divide? All for the report of the committee and organization, follow me!' The effect was electrical. The men on either side fell into their places to be counted. The ayes were fifty-two; the noes, fifty. Another account says the ayes were fifty-five; but it is probable that in the larger number some absentees, or persons who were expected but were not present, were included. Upon the announcement of the vote the opponents of the organization mounted their horses and rode away, and left the field to the Americans. It was a victory to which missionaries, mountaineers, and independent settlers had contributed; it was a victory of the American spirit, asserted by the courageous few, at this remotest outpost of the American Republic. Honor to the spirit and courage of Joseph L. Meek; honor to the leader-



REV. CUSHING EELLS

A Pioneer Congregationalist Missionary of 1838.





ship of one who, though wholly without conventional culture, and lacking even in the elementary parts of school education, proved himself the man for the place and the time."

An analysis in detail is then given in this address, itself a monument of the occasion and fittingly placed with the monument of stone of the further growth of this remarkable government, and closes with the following paragraphs: "It has not been my purpose on this occasion to go into details as to legislation of the Provisional Government and its organic law. Any account of these details would be too long for the present discourse. Many of them may be had in Thornton's Sketch, to which I have already adverted. The organic law itself may be found in Deady's code—a book which, though now out of print, is readily accessible. It is also printed in Brown's "Political History of Oregon"—a book of high value, containing a greater number of documents and facts relating to the Provisional Government and the early political history of Oregon than has elsewhere been collected.

"What shall I say more of the impressive scene that was enacted upon this spot eight and fifty years ago? All the actors save one, the venerable F. X. Matthieu, who providentially is with us to-day, have passed from earth. The results of their work remain; and what we must regard as a thing of high significance is the fact that they well understood that they were laying the foundation of a State. In what

they did here that day there was a clear premonition to them that it was a work for unborn ages. The instinct for making States, an instinct that so strongly characterizes that portion of the human race that has created the United States of America, never had clearer manifestation or more vigorous assertion. On the spot where this work was done we dedicate this monument this day. May every inhabitant of the Oregon country, through all ages, take pride in this spot, and an interest in preservation of this monument, as a memento of what was done here! ”

## CHAPTER X

### STRUGGLE FOR THE COLUMBIA



CONCERNING Dr. Whitman and his part in securing Oregon to the United States, there has already been more difference of opinion than in regard to any other one person or matter in the history of this State. It is a theme for special inquiry, and already the literature upon the subject is quite considerable and increasing. Whether his claims to remembrance will outlive those of others, and whether he will be regarded as the most representative of those that extended American ideas to the Pacific; or whether he will hold a position in the pantheon of national heroes, to which some would assign him, can only be determined by the course of historical conclusions in the future. But the difficulty of fixing upon any one man, or any one event, where all the characters were significant becomes apparent in any just study of Whitman and his work, as of all others. In this chapter will be related his winter journey to Washington and New York and Boston, and an account given of the immigration of 1843, with which he returned.

After making a settlement and erecting buildings at Waiilatpu, among the Cayuse Indians, Whitman continued his labors, laying particular stress upon the Indians learning the arts and industries of civilized life, and endeavoring to supply them with cattle and sheep, in order that they might live more comfortably, and cease their long journeys, now to the Klamath country, now the Yakima, now to the Snake



River, and perhaps across the mountains to the buffalo country. These excursions were often of a predatory character and kept alive the spirit of savagery and contempt of industry. The Cayuses, moreover, were from old time the leading military tribe, and have been called the Romans of the Indians; making themselves lords everywhere. They justly merited the name of knights, or horseman, and the name Cayuse has become identified with that of Indian pony. Whitman's industry in establishing his mission is thus mentioned by Farnham:

“It appeared to me quite remarkable that the Doctor could have made so many improvements since the year 1836; but the industry which crowded every hour of the day, his untiring energy of character, and the very efficient aid of his wife in relieving him in a great degree of the labors of the school, are perhaps circumstances which render possibility probable, that in three years one man, without funds for such purposes, without other aid for that purpose than that of a fellow missionary for short intervals, should fence, plow, build, plant an orchard, and do all the other laborious acts of opening a plantation on the face of that distant wilderness, learn the Indian language, and do the duties, meanwhile, of a physician to the associate stations on the Clearwater and Spokane.”

While considerable success had been attained in several of the missions established by the American Board, of which there were at one time five, the home

secretaries were not well satisfied. Differences of opinion had also been developed among the missionaries themselves. Gray, who had come with Whitman, in 1836, returned east and married and came back again in 1838, with Eells and Walker, and A. B. Smith, who had attempted a mission among the upper Nez Perces, but had been forbidden by them to break the ground, had asked and obtained release from the stations; Gray going to the Willamette in September of 1842, and Smith going to the Sandwich Islands. Spalding had developed an especial enmity to Mrs. Whitman, which for a time greatly constrained the relations of Whitman with him. Discouraging reports were written to the Board, and on this account the somewhat summary method was recommended of discontinuing the two southern missions entirely. On February 15, 1842, the Board, after comparing correspondence of the missionaries, passed a resolution "that the Rev. Henry H. Spalding be recalled, with instructions to return by the first direct and suitable opportunity; that Mr. William H. Gray be advised to return home, and also the Rev. Asa B. Smith, on account of the illness of his wife; that Dr. Marcus Whitman and Mr. Cornelius Rogers be designated to the northern branch of the mission; and that the two last named be authorized to dispose of the mission property in the southern branch of the mission."

In May, however, of the same year the annual meeting of the missionaries of this Board was held,

a general reconciliation took place, and a letter was written the Board that their difficulties had been settled, and they now anticipated better results than had yet been attained. It appears that the letter of the Board with the order to discontinue the southern branch of the mission reached Whitman sometime in the autumn. On this, or other accounts, Whitman asked that a meeting of the members of the missions be held September 26th, at Wailatpu.

Whitman's immediate object in calling a meeting of his associates was to consider the contents of the communication from the American Board of Foreign Missions, which had been received, and which ordered that his own and Spalding's mission should be abandoned. He greatly regretted this order, as he believed that his mission and Spalding's were now likely, since a general understanding and reconciliation had been reached, to enter upon a new field of usefulness to the Indians, and that his own in particular was very valuable as a way point for the American immigrants. The mission question thus took in his mind the same course as had been the case with Jason Lee. His special proposition, to meet the situation, was that he return immediately to the East, lay the matter before the Prudential Committee at Boston—a Board associated with the secretaries of the society, and consisting largely of Boston business men, whose function was to decide upon questions of policy—and endeavor to secure the reversal of the order. He also had a special project, which

was not dissimilar from that of Lee's; that he secure, if possible, a considerable number of Christian mechanics and farmers, who should settle around the respective missions, and thus enable the missionaries to devote more time to their own proper work, and to act as a body of Protestants and Americans to counteract the efforts that were already under way on the part of the Roman Catholics to convert the Indians from Protestantism to Catholicism. As stated by him later, he deemed it important that the country become American and Protestant rather than British and Catholic. Evidence that he had at that time, that is before starting East, further plans for encouraging American immigration, has been brought by his special defenders from the recollection of his associates, who have said that he strongly asserted such a purpose. This evidence has been rejected by critics of the "Whitman Legend" as insufficient. The contemporary evidence is only in his visit to Washington and his letter later to the Secretary of War; and his own claims within three or four years after his trip East and successful return.

Writing October 3d following, Cushing Eells acknowledged receipt of the order for discontinuance, explained their action in May, and stated to the Board, "With this view of the case you will see why we were so unwilling to abandon the south branch, for, as it seemed to us, by giving up that we were giving up the whole mission. Notwithstanding, we

thought that the object of your letter had been accomplished by the reconciliation which had taken place, still we felt ourselves placed in a trying situation. We hardly knew what course to pursue, but concluded to wait until we could receive an answer to the committee of the mission stating that the difficulties were settled. . . . And as we were about starting for our place, a proposition was made by Dr. Whitman for him to return to the States this winter and confer with the Prudential Committee, and conduct a reënforcement out next summer, if it was thought best to continue the mission. . . . I have no doubt if the plan succeeds it will be one of great good to the mission and to the country. It is to be expected that a Romish influence will come in. . . . To meet this influence a few religious settlers around a mission would be invaluable."

Eells speaks in his letter of the doubt into which they were thrown by Whitman's proposition. "We wanted time to think and pray over it, and proposed to return and send in writing our conclusion. But we were told there was no time to be lost, that we must decide it now, or it would be too late. . . . It seemed death to put the proposition in force, and worse than death to remain as we were." Eells probably intended by this strong language that the hazards of the winter journey were so great to Whitman that it was a risk that should not be taken; but to give up the southern branch at Wailatpu, and to break off the work at Lapwai was worse than death,

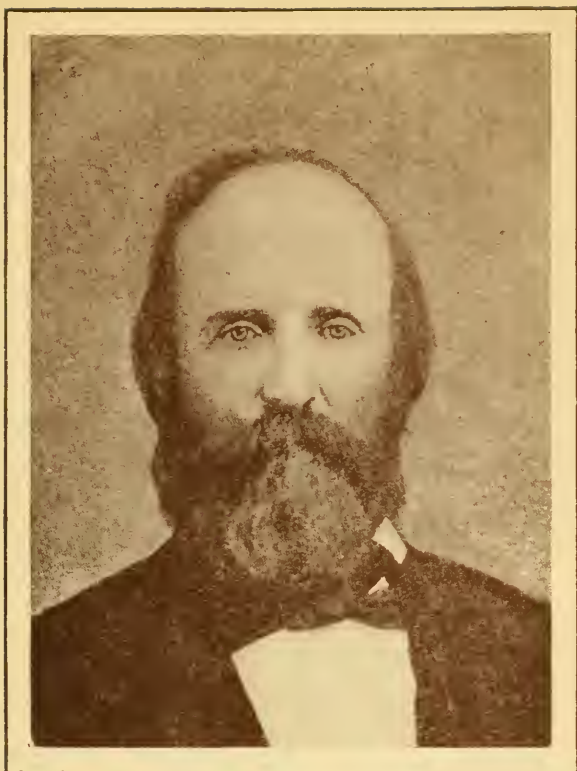
in destroying the efficiency of the mission, in which they now all felt that their hearts were united.

So far as appears from this Whitman had in prospect about the same as that which Lee and White had already successfully accomplished. Jason Lee had returned East, and had brought back some fifty persons; White had returned and came back with over one hundred. It seemed probable to him that if he returned and made special effort he might bring an increased number. His special object, as clearly set forth by Eells' letter, was to reënforce the missions of the upper Columbia, and place around each of them a considerable number of American families. He had undoubtedly been keeping a careful watch of the political situation, and also of the probability of American immigration during the coming season of 1843. He wrote in May of 1842: "There will probably be a large party of emigrants coming to this country in the spring of 1843. Some young men are now returning with the expectation of bringing out a party next spring." McLoughlin also mentions this prospect, saying, "When the immigration of 1842 came we had breadstuffs enough in the country for one year, but as the immigrants reported that there would be a greater immigration the next season, it was evident," etc. It is altogether probable, therefore, that Whitman was keeping himself as fully informed of the prospect of immigration as was possible in his circumstances.

The exigencies of his mission, or the plan of bring-



ing out special emigrants to settle in the Walla Walla Valley, have hardly seemed to some to warrant the hazards of a winter journey; and the fact that he proceeded at once to Washington and held conferences with the Secretary of War, and probably with the Secretary of State and the President, as well as with senators and other public men in Washington and at New York, have pointed to a keen interest in the political status of Oregon, and that he, like Jason Lee and Dr. White, was prepared to give any information he might obtain in regard to the country and prospects here. The journey East, whatever its object, was one of much interest, and as it was taken in connection with one of Oregon's most useful pioneers, Amos Lawrence Lovejoy, afterward one of the founders of Portland, and adjutant general of the Provisional Government, the account given by him is highly valuable as illustrating again with what labors this commonwealth was erected. Lovejoy had scarcely reached Whitman's, as related by Medorem Crawford, before he was asked by the doctor to accompany him East; and with most remarkable courage he complied. In a letter dated Portland, November 6, 1869, he gives the following account: "Previous to our leaving Waiilatpu I often had conversations with the doctor touching the prospects of this coast. The doctor was alive to its interests, and manifested a very warm desire to have this country properly represented at Washington, and after some arrangements, we left Waiilatpu, October 3, 1842, overland,



A. LAWRENCE LOVEJOY  
One of the Founders of Portland.



for the Eastern States. We traveled rapidly and reached Fort Hall in eleven days, and remained only a day or two and made some few purchases; took a guide and left for Fort Wintee, as the doctor changed from a direct route to one more southern through the Spanish country, via Taos and Santa Fé. [This change was due to the information that there was Indian war on the Platte.—ED.]. On our way from Fort Hall to Fort Wintee we met with terribly severe weather; the snows greatly retarded our progress, and blinded the trail so that we lost much time. After reaching Fort Wintee and making some suitable purchases for our trip, we took a new guide and started on our journey for Fort Macumpagra [Umcompagre], situated on the waters of the Grand River in the Spanish country.

“ Here again our stay was very short. We simply made some few purchases, and left for Taos. After being out some four or five days, as we were passing over some very high table lands, we encountered a most terrific snowstorm, which forced us to seek shelter at once. A deep ravine being near by, we rapidly made for it, but the snow fell so rapidly and the wind blew with such violence that it was almost impossible to reach it. After reaching the ravine and cutting some cottonwood trees for our animals we attempted some arrangements to camp as well as we could under the circumstances, and remained snowed in for some three or four days, when the snowstorm subsided, and it cleared off intensely cold. It was with

much difficulty that we made our way up upon the highlands; the snow was so deep and the wind so piercing and cold, that we felt compelled to return to camp and wait a few days for a change of weather.

“ Our next effort was (little) more successful, and after spending several days wandering around in the snow, without making much headway and greatly fatiguing our animals, to little or no purpose, our guide informed us that the deep snow had so changed the face of the country that he was completely lost, and could take us no further. This was a terrible blow to the doctor. He was determined not to give it up without another effort, and we at once agreed that the doctor should take the guide and make his way back to the fort and procure a new guide, and that I should remain in camp with the animals until his return, which was on the seventh day, with a new guide. We were soon under way, traveling through the snow at rather a snail’s pace. Nothing occurred of much importance, other than the hard and slow traveling until we reached, as our guide informed us, the Grand River, which was frozen on either side about one-third across. The current was so very rapid that the center of the stream remained open, although the weather was so intensely cold.

“ This stream was some one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards wide, and was looked upon by our guide as very dangerous to cross in its present condition. But the doctor, nothing daunted, was the first to take the water. He mounted his horse and

the guide and myself pushed them off the ice into the boiling foaming stream. Away they went completely under water, horse and all, but directly came up, and after buffeting the waves and foaming current, he made to the ice on the opposite side, a long way down the stream—leaped from his horse onto the ice, and soon had his noble animal by his side. The guide and I forced in the pack animals, followed the doctor's example, and were soon drying our frozen clothes by a comfortable fire.

“ With our new guide, traveling slowly on, we reached Taos in about thirty days. We suffered considerably from cold and scarcity of provisions, and for food were compelled to eat the flesh of mules, dogs and such other animals as came within our reach. We remained at Taos some fifteen days, where we changed off our animals and made such purchases as our journey required and left for Bent's Fort, on the headwaters of the Arkansas River, where we arrived about the third of January, 1843. The doctor left here on the seventh, at which time we parted, and I did not meet him again until some time in the month of July, above Fort Laramie, on his way to Oregon with a train of emigrants.

“ The doctor often expressed himself to me about the remainder of his journey and the manner in which he was received at Washington, and by the Board of Missions at Boston. The doctor had several interviews with President Tyler, Secretary Webster, and many members of Congress, touching the interests



of Oregon. He urged the immediate termination of the treaty with Great Britain relative to this country, and the extension of the laws of the United States, and [to provide] liberal inducements to emigrants to come to this coast. He felt much chagrined at the lack of interest and the great want of knowledge concerning Oregon and the wants of this country, though he was very cordially and kindly received, and many seemed anxious to obtain every information which he could give them; and I have no doubt the doctor's interviews resulted greatly to the benefit of Oregon and the entire coast.

“ But his reception at Boston was not so cordial. The Board censured him for leaving his post, for the waste of time, and the great expense attending so long a journey across the continent at that time of the year. The doctor returned to the frontier settlements urging the citizens to emigrate to the Pacific Coast. After his exertions in this behalf he left for Independence, and started for Oregon with a large emigrant train some time in May. With his energy and knowledge of the country he rendered them very great assistance and continued to do so till he reached his home, about the first of October [about a year from the time he left], to find the home of his choice sadly neglected, and the flouring mill burned to the ground. The Indians were very hostile about the doctor leaving at the time he did. . . .”

There seems to be no lack of corroborative evidence that Whitman visited Washington, and con-

versed with Secretary Porter of the War Department, with whom he afterward corresponded; that he urged before this department, and perhaps before the others, establishing of a line of agricultural posts from the Missouri River to the borders of Oregon, and that the Indians of the interior be organized as a police force to maintain the peace, and be suitably officered from the posts. He also is mentioned as having visited Horace Greeley, of the *New York Tribune*, by whom his work as a missionary was very favorably mentioned. At Boston he was rather closely questioned, but upon evidence of the minutes of the meeting of the Prudential Committee all that he desired was granted. The order discontinuing the southern branch of the mission, that on the Clearwater and at Wailatpu, was reversed. Spalding was to be retained, and an additional missionary, if one could be found, was allowed. The project to obtain a suitable body of settlers near the missions was approved.

His services on the journey across the plains, with the emigrants, are thus noticed by J. W. Nesmith, who was in that party. "Dr. Marcus Whitman, in charge of the mission at Wailatpu, in the Walla Walla Valley, was not a regular clergyman, though he sometimes preached. He traveled with the immigration of 1843 from the Missouri frontier to near the Snake River [Fort Boise]. I regarded him as a quiet, unassuming man, of great purity of character. He was of powerful physical organization,

and possessed a great and good heart, full of charity and courage, and utterly destitute of cant, hypocrisy, shams and effeminacy, and always terribly in earnest. While with us he was clad entirely in buckskin, and rode upon one of those patient long-eared animals said to be 'without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity.' The doctor spent much of his time in hunting out the best route for the wagons, and would plunge into streams in search of practical fords, regardless of the depth or temperature of the water, and sometimes after the fatigues of a hard day's march would spend much of the night in going from one party to another to minister to the sick. While his moral character was of the highest, he said more to us about the practical matters connected with our march than he did about theology or religious creeds, and I believe that his conduct among the Indians was of the same practical, useful character; and that he was impressed with the necessity of teaching them habits of industry and economy, as the surest road to civilization and happiness."

In one of the most graphic and best composed articles ever produced by a citizen of Oregon—"A Day with the Cow Column of 1843"—Jesse Applegate has left this picture of Dr. Whitman and his aid to the immigrants:

"But a little incident breaks the monotony of the march. An immigrant's wife, whose state of health has caused Dr. Whitman to travel near the wagon for the day, is now taken with violent illness. The

doctor has had the wagon driven out of the line, a tent pitched, and a fire kindled. Many conjectures are hazarded in regard to this mysterious proceeding, and as to why this lone wagon is to be left behind." . . . [After making camp at evening.] "There are anxious watchers for the absent wagon, for there are many matrons who may be afflicted like its inmate before the journey is over; and they fear the strange and startling practice of this Oregon doctor may be dangerous. But as the sun goes down the absent wagon rolls into camp, the bright, speaking face and cheery look of the doctor, who rides in advance, declare without words that all is well, and both mother and child are comfortable. I would fain here and now pay a passing tribute to that noble, devoted man, Dr. Whitman. I will obtrude no other name on the reader, nor would I his, were he of our party, or even living; but his stay with us was transient, though the good he did us permanent, and he has long since died at his post. From the time he joined us on the Platte until he left us at Fort Hall [Fort Boise.—ED.], his great experience and indomitable energy were of priceless value to the migrating column. His constant advice, which we knew was based on a knowledge of the road before us, was—'travel, travel, travel—nothing else will take you to the end of your journey; nothing is good for you that causes a moment's delay.' His great authority as a physician and complete success in the case above referred to, saved us many prolonged and

perhaps ruinous delays from similar causes, and it is no disparagement to others to say that to no other individual are the immigrants of 1843 so much indebted for the successful conclusion of their journey as to Dr. Marcus Whitman."

These extracts sufficiently show the high and almost adulatory esteem in which Dr. Whitman was held by the pioneers of Oregon, and add pathos to the tragedy of his death. This explains to a large extent the readiness with which almost any value might be assigned to his services in securing the territory in dispute to the Americans. His claims to the gratitude and affections of the people of Oregon can never be denied; his services as a statesman must be examined by specialists upon the broader principle of historical criticism.

Much has been conjectured as to the originators of the great immigration of 1843. That this large and decisive movement was all due to the efforts of any one person is an hypothesis quite as irrational as that it had no particular precedent conditions. That there was something rather exceptional about it may be inferred in a general way by noticing the numbers of the immigrants for this period of years. In 1842, the first of the regular immigrants, there were 137, as given by Judge Evans; in 1843 they rose to 875; in 1844, they fell to 475; and in 1845 reached the large number of about 3,000; but dropping in 1846 to 1,350; and in 1847 between 4,000 and 5,000; 1843 was therefore the first highwater mark,



JAMES W. NESMITH

United States Senator from Oregon, 1860-66.





and must have had exceptionally favorable precedent conditions. Some of these will be found, as in a succeeding chapter the course of diplomacy is traced; others must be attributed to the personal exertions of individuals. One of these was Dr. White, who led the party of 1842. A considerable number who had been influenced to think of going to Oregon were not ready when White left, and others still thought it more prudent to wait and hear how this first party of immigrants got through and liked the country.

One of the left over ones of 1842 was J. W. Nesmith, then a youth but a little past his majority, a native of the border country between Maine and New Brunswick, and of an old and highly respected Scotch and Irish ancestry. His father had been a man of wealth, but lost his all in the terrible forest fires of 1825 that devastated New Brunswick, and with the one son at length wandered West and died. James W., the young man, having tasted all the bitterness of hardship and misfortune, but never losing his native buoyancy, was, in the winter of 1841-2, as he says, in Jefferson County, Iowa, where he heard of Dr. White's party about to cross the plains, and thinking this a good opportunity to take the trip which he had even then been sometime contemplating, he saddled his horse, and rode across western Iowa; but found the party already gone seventeen days. To the visit of Dr. Whitman, and his report of the safe arrival of the last immigrants, and his representations at Washington, Nesmith attributes some com-

motion in Washington, at the capital, and "some stir among the ever restless and adventurous frontiersmen. Word was passed that an emigration party would start as soon as grass grew. Independence, and particularly a point known as Fitzhugh's Mill, was made the rallying point." This could not have been without some sort of preconcert; and we find that during the preceding winter Peter H. Burnett had been making vigorous efforts to promote an emigration to Oregon. Burnett was then a lawyer but had been a merchant in the "Platte Purchase" of western Missouri. As he himself tells us very frankly in his "Recollections of a Pioneer," he had failed in business and undertook law as a means of repairing his fortunes; but having learned of the prospects of a new State on the Pacific Coast had concluded that there, rather than in the Mississippi Valley, was his chance. After conferring with his creditors and asking their permission to attempt accumulation of wealth that it seemed impossible to get where money was so scarce as along the Missouri frontier, he was bidden go, and began with great energy interesting his neighbors, and extending his efforts even to distant places. As remarked by one of his party, Ninian Eberman, of '43, Burnett nearly "took the whole coast" when he did come; becoming at length the first governor of California, a chief justice and a wealthy banker in San Francisco. He was successful in his project, and had the satisfaction of paying in full the obligations that

his narrow practice in the Platte Purchase could never have satisfied. Burnett was undoubtedly a prime mover in this immigration, as he became the captain, and a most efficient leader. Of the meeting at Fitzhugh's Mill, as the emigrants assembled and organized for the march, Colonel Nesmith has left a most interesting and humorous account. According to the time-honored American custom it was desirable to harangue the assembled people, in order to impress the object of the movement, show the necessity of organization, and, moreover, to let the candidates for responsible position make themselves known and prove their fitness. "Mr. Burnett, or as he was more familiarly styled, 'Pete,' was called upon for a speech. Mounting a log the glib-tongued orator delivered a glowing, florid address. He commenced by showing his audience that the then western tier of States and Territories were crowded with a redundant population, who had not sufficient elbow room for the expansion of their enterprise and genius, and it was a duty they owed to themselves and posterity to strike out in search of a more expanded field and a more genial climate, where the soil yielded the richest return for the slightest amount of cultivation—where the trees were loaded with perennial fruit—and where a good substitute for bread, called La Camash, grew in the ground; where salmon and other fish crowded the streams; and where the principal labor of the settler would be confined to keeping their gardens free from the in-

roads of buffalo, elk, deer and wild turkeys. He appealed to our patriotism by picturing forth the glorious empire we should establish upon the shores of the Pacific—how with our trusty rifles we should drive out the British usurpers who claimed the soil, and defend the country from the avarice and pretensions of the British Lion—and how posterity would honor us for placing the fairest portion of the land under the stars and stripes. . . . Other speeches were made full of glowing descriptions of the fair land of promise, the far-away Oregon, which no one in the assemblage had ever seen, and about which not more than half a dozen had ever read any account. After the election of Mr. Burnett as captain, and other necessary officers, the meeting, as motley and primitive a one as ever assembled, adjourned with ‘three cheers’ for Captain Burnett and Oregon.”

Merry, however, as Senator Nesmith—for he became judge and senator, as well as colonel—might make with his pioneer friends in recalling that eventful meeting at Fitzhugh’s Mill, it is clearly seen that in that motley assemblage, consisting of people from all the States and Territories, and nearly all nationalities, were all the great ideas that have distinguished the American people. It was a company that had listened to the story of the nation’s life at many an Independence Day gathering, and had heard discussed by the ablest orators all the great questions of present policy; they knew the history of their race, and were as ready to try on the Pacific as their

fathers had done on the Atlantic their traditional principles; and after having cheered the man who could make the American Eagle scream across the Rocky Mountains, and wave the Stars and Stripes over the shores of the Pacific, they proceeded with glee to construct a strict and orderly government for their undertaking on the way. This was another little, thin band, striking out over the immensity of a continent, having no warrant but American ideas to guide them.

A large promoter of the emigration was Jesse Applegate,\* a surveyor by occupation, and a man of eminent natural qualities. To him greatest credit is given by Nesmith. He was, among others who might be named, one of Oregon's greatest men. Miles Ayers, a cutler with a considerable stock of knives and tools from St. Louis, but originally from Sheffield, England; John Hobson and his family, also from England, and intending to settle in Wisconsin, but induced by Dr. Whitman to come to Oregon; Daniel Waldo, for whom the Waldo Hills were named and founder of the highly influential family of that name in Oregon; Ninian Eberman, one of the young men who afterward went to California and held it

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\* In "Pacific Trail Camp Fires," by Reese P. Kendall, M.D., it is stated that as many as three hundred of the immigrants of 1843 were brought into the organization by Jesse Applegate; and that much of his information, and a complete way bill was furnished by letters of Robert Shortess. By comparison with the account of Shortess it will be seen that the route taken by the Peoria party differed materially from that of the immigration of 1843.

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for the Americans; M. M. McCarver, the founder of Linnton in Oregon and of Tacoma in Washington, one of the early legislators of the State; Henry Hunt, who brought on that trip a complete sawmill; John B. McClane, long in the Indian service; Thomas G. Naylor, one of the fathers for Forest Grove, and of progressive agriculture in Oregon; John Howell, who gave the name to one of the large prairies of the Willamette; Almorán Hill, a leading pioneer of Washington County; John M. Shiveley, sometimes spoken of as the founder of the Astoria as now known, and first postmaster in Oregon; Solomon Emerick, one of the most daring of the early plainsmen; Ford, Garrison, Hembree, Dement, the Mathenys, Mauzee, John Ricord—these are a few of the names, a list of which is given by Nesmith. Reference to this list shows that many of the leading families of Oregon date to the immigration of 1843.\*

For pilot, or guide, John Gantt, an old army officer, who had long been familiar with the Western wilderness, was employed. He said that he knew the way perfectly as far as Green River, and that it would

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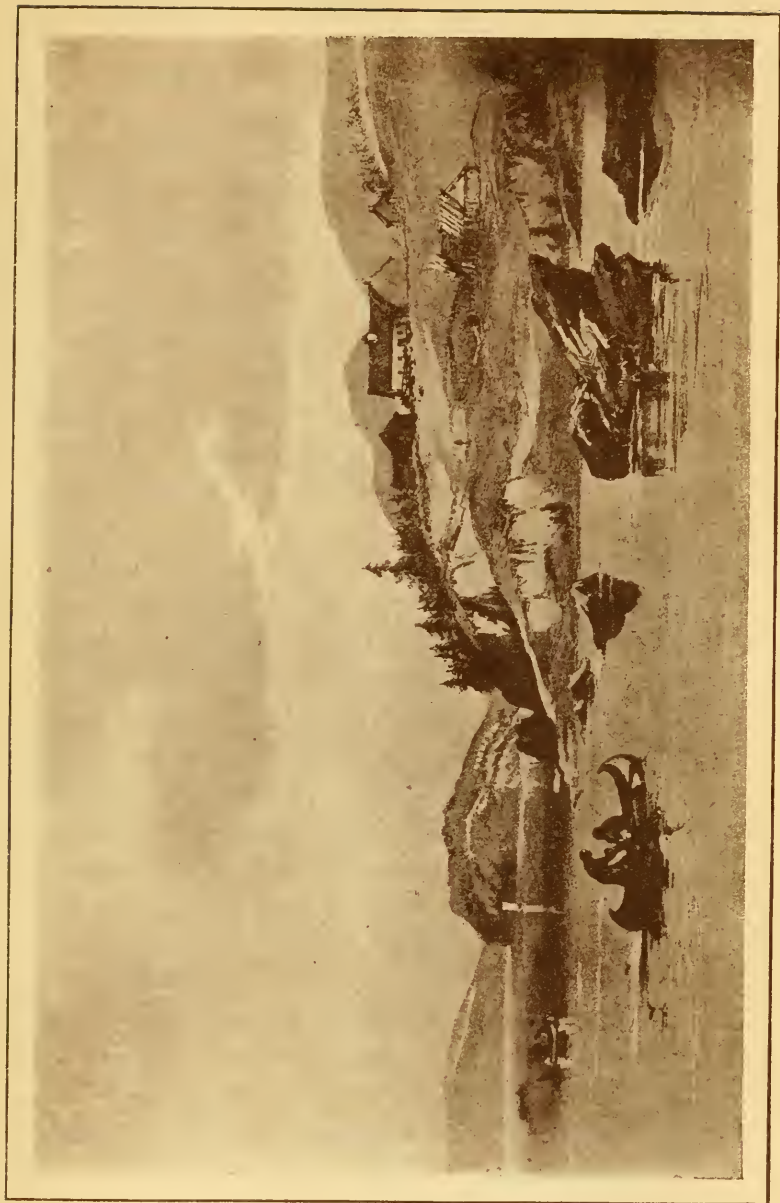
\* "It (the immigration of 1843) numbered about nine hundred persons, among whom were many men of strong character and conspicuous ability, as: James W. Nesmith, Jesse Applegate, Matthew Gilmore, M. M. McCarver, John G. Baker, Absalom J. Hembree, Daniel Waldo, William T. Newby, Henry A. G. Lee, John and Daniel Holman, Thomas G. Naylor, John B. Jackson, the first American settler between the Columbia River and Puget Sound; Peter H. Burnett, who went from Oregon to California and became the first governor of that State after its admission to the American Union, and many more."—H. W. Scott.

admit of wagon travel. Beyond that his knowledge did not extend. This deficiency was made up by Dr. Whitman, who was familiar with the course throughout. Soon after starting the compact military order with which they began the journey was found too cumbrous, and the company was divided into two columns, which traveled within supporting distance of each other. Precautions were taken against the Sioux Indians, who were understood to be unfriendly to the passage of wagons through their country, and drove off the buffalo. A strong corral was made each night by simply driving the wagons into a circle, with the tongues united at rest to the rear of the preceding. Arriving at Fort Hall immigrants were informed by the commandant, Captain Grant, that to take wagons over the mountains to the West was a physical impossibility; and he showed them the wagons left at that post by the party of the year before. Whitman, however, as stated by Nesmith, was persistent in his assertions that wagons could proceed as far as the Grand Dalles of the Columbia, from which they could be boated down, and the cattle could be driven over the Cascades by an old Indian trail north of Mount Hood. His advice prevailed.

After passing Fort Hall the emigration became much divided, and as there was no longer fear of the Indians they came forward in smaller bodies. At Fort Boise Dr. Whitman was met by some of his Cayuse Indians, Sticcus, or Isticus, being one of them; and no more faithful man than Sticcus ever

piloted a body of now entirely disconnected and practically defenseless men and women and children. For Whitman received word that his services would be needed at Lapwai, and hastened forward in a light wagon to make this added trip. With him rode J. B. McClane, who has left an account of the doctor's placing poles to indicate the route, with written instructions as to grass and water and camping places. Sticcus, however, remained with the advance portion of the immigrants, and showed them the best passes through his own ancestral Blue Mountain country. He never failed in his kindness to the whites, and at the massacre of Whitman at Waiilatpu did all in his power to guard and protect the children that were spared. Even in this haughty and recalcitrant tribe there proved to be some who were faithful to the last to the original impulses of humanity. With the arrival of the immigration of 1843 the preponderance of interest swung to the American side.

At this point in the history the character of the great-hearted chief factor at Vancouver shines out with unusual brightness. During the absence of Dr. Whitman on his mission East the Cayuse Indians became very troublesome. They were opposed to his going, feeling that he might bring a large body of whites to occupy their country and diminish their power. His intentions for them were most generous; urging upon the Secretary of War that sheep were better than soldiers for the Indians, and already plan-



FORT GEORGE IN 1845

The canoe shown is a *birch bark* from the North; not the Chlmook wooden canoe.  
From an old print.



ning a measure for employing them as guardians of the peace in connection with agricultural and post stations under a government officer. But this was unknown, or at least uncomprehended by this jealous tribe. In the absence of Dr. Whitman they suffered without redress an attempted intrusion into Mrs. Whitman's apartment. By this she became alarmed and accepted the invitation of Pambrun to go to Fort Walla Walla. During the summer she went to the Dalles, and was also most handsomely entertained in the family of McLoughlin at Vancouver, and among the missionaries of the Willamette Valley, and at Clatsop.

News of the arrival of the Americans preceded them. McLoughlin observed that the Indians were excited, and biding his time soon learned that they would be determined in their treatment of the immigrants by his disposition. He maintained a close watch, and as the first stragglers of the now all but disorganized companies were arriving, in canoes, he was standing upon the bank, while somewhat nearer the water was a group of about a dozen Indians. One of them suddenly bawled out in his Indian language, "It is good to kill these Bostons." Perceiving instantly that this was but an attempt to sound him, and knowing that if he regarded the suggestion with any appearance of satisfaction, or even of indifference, it would be taken as permission, he instantly showed his intense displeasure. He rushed upon them with his cane, and called out and shouted in his



tremendous voice, using the term most deeply cutting to an Indian, "Who is the dog that says that it is a good thing to kill the Bostons?" The Indian who had thus drawn the doctor's ire now trembled and said that he meant no harm; he was simply repeating what he had heard the Dalles Indians saying. "Well," answered the doctor, showing all his displeasure still, and without softening, "the Dalles Indians are dogs for saying so; and you also." And abruptly left him. By this, as the doctor fully believed, the Indians became convinced that any wrong to the Americans would be punished by the Hudson's Bay Company. This was the authority they then respected, and McLoughlin was the one man they feared.

Boats for transportation were freely supplied, and all necessary provisions were furnished. Some of the immigrants were destitute, but these were not therefore subjected to discrimination. As mentioned heretofore, McLoughlin understood that there would be a large immigration, and had encouraged a large sowing of wheat; so there was bread in the country. That a business man should provide supplies for a community may seem as no more than should be expected; and refusal to sell, or even to extend on credit what families needed would certainly be considered a great wrong. The singularity was that these immigrants were likely to terminate his fur business.

## CHAPTER XI

### PROGRESS OF PUBLIC OPINION AND NEGOTIATION



**G**OVERNMENT in the United States has been conceived to rest upon the will of the people; and that its acts were but the embodiment into law of what the citizens preferred. The more nearly our government has thus understood its function, and has learned and carried into effect the wishes of the masses, the more thoroughly, apparently, has it preserved its dignity and has advanced its possessions and power. The conflict of arms between the States was said by Mr. Lincoln to be a test of the doctrine, that a government chosen and administered by the people, could concentrate the experience and sustain the power necessary to maintain its existence. In the settlement of Oregon, and the Oregon Question growing out of this, it was tested whether a popular government could concentrate the interest and furnish the wisdom to carry into effect the wishes of a growing people for the territorial expansion that would meet their future business necessities and political aspirations. Theoretically it would be expected that in such a case the voice of the people would be heard first, and that our government would halt until public opinion became overwhelming.

Such, in fact, we find to be the case. The government has been accused of supineness, dilatoriness, and on more than one occasion came perilously near allowing the necessary action to lapse; but in the event gained all that the people contemplated, and

even exceeded expectations; and this in final controversy with a government so active as that of Great Britain, which has not been restricted to popular opinion, and which has the reputation of never yielding a possession once coveted.

Colonel Nesmith, in one of his jovial Pioneer Day Addresses, has said: "I was a poor, homeless youth, destitute alike of friends, money, and education. Actuated by a reckless spirit of adventure, one place was to me the same as another. . . . But in the emigration that accompanied me there were staid men of mature years and cultivated intellects—men who left comparatively comfortable homes and friends; and with their wives and children gave up the advantages of civilization to cross a desert beset with hostile savages, to go they knew not whither. . . . The fled from no such evils as brought either the Pilgrims or Cavaliers . . . nor were led by the inducements that sent Cortez to the New World. Then, it may be asked, why did such men peril everything—burning their ships behind them, exposing their helpless families to the possibilities of massacre and starvation, braving death—and for what purpose? I am not quite certain a rational answer will ever be given to that question." The proximate answer, at least, is found in the strongly diffused sense of national need of Oregon, the Columbia River route, and the open Pacific. This had been fed by almost unremitting public discussion since the days of Lewis and Clark, or even of Ledyard, and was the

survival of the Colonial days. The acts of Congress and of the executive department furnish the record of that sense as it rose to public and political expression.

The mouth of the Columbia was discovered by Gray in 1792. It was explored from some of its principal sources to the mouth by Lewis and Clark in 1805. A settlement by Americans was begun at Oak Point in 1809. A fur-trading post was built by an American on Snake River in 1810. Astoria was founded by an American in 1811; was captured by the British in 1813; was restored to America in 1818. By agreement between Great Britain and the United States the forty-ninth parallel as far west as the Rocky Mountains became the border; Oregon was left to joint occupancy. In 1819 the boundary between the United States and Spanish possessions was fixed on latitude 42 degrees, from head of the Arkansas to the Pacific. In 1824, and in 1825, the Russian claims were limited on the north to 54 degrees, 40 minutes. In 1821 Floyd, of Virginia, introduced a bill in Congress authorizing the military occupation of Oregon. This followed publications since 1817 by Hall J. Kelley; but was not passed, being considered inconsistent with the treaty. In 1828 the treaty of joint occupation was indefinitely renewed, with proviso of a year's notice by either power to abrogate. In 1838 Linn, of Missouri, brought a bill into the Senate authorizing a fort at the mouth of the Columbia, and a territorial government for Ore-



gon north of latitude 42. Following this was a memorial from residents of Oregon forwarded by Jason Lee.

This memorial, already noticed more fully, signed by J. L. Whitecomb and thirty-five others, was drawn March 16, 1838, and presented to Congress by Linn, January, 1839; Linn's bill, of 1838, was referred to a committee of five, himself chairman, but failed of passage. In the meantime, as ably noticed by J. C. Calhoun—"Now our population may be safely estimated at not less than nineteen millions—of which at least eight millions inhabit the States and Territories in the valley of the Mississippi, and of which one million are in the States and Territories west of that river." Immigration into the West was becoming greatly accelerated. The migratory habit once encouraged and accustoming the people to free lands, and the expansive life of the primitive agriculture, led the way to a desire to occupy the Columbia Valley. The reasons actuating the people were natural enough. Free lands were rapidly disappearing in the Mississippi Valley; malarial diseases made life a burden to many in the new States of that region. West of Missouri and Iowa, in Kansas and Nebraska, winters were severe, summers dry, timber scarce, transportation prohibitive to farm produce before railways should be built; and danger from Indians not inconsiderable. In Oregon land was free, range unlimited, the country well timbered and well watered, malaria little known, and the country accessi-

ble by water communication by sea. Another great inducement to many of the people of Missouri lay in the fact that in Oregon there was no slave labor. The Missouri farmer without slaves could not compete with the slave-owning planter. To these motives the fact that Great Britain desired Oregon, or the larger part of it, stimulated the spirit of patriotism.

By 1839 many petitions were sent to Congress from individuals, or companies, asking that laws be extended to Oregon, or military protection be granted to emigrants. One such, inserted in Brown's history, is from twelve men stating that they had formed "The Oregon Provisional Emigration Society," to settle west of the Rocky Mountains, and praying that "such special privileges and immunities may be granted them as shall in the judgment of your honorable bodies be consistent with the honor and interest of the United States, and calculated to promote the welfare of settlers in Oregon."

In 1840 the petition signed by David Leslie and others, already mentioned, was prepared. February 27th, of the same year, Mr. Toppen, of Ohio, presented a petition of two hundred and thirty-eight citizens of his State, wishing to make a settlement on Snake River, and asking protection; and Mr. Allen presented a petition of one hundred and thirty-three citizens of Ohio, asking that the laws of the United States be extended over Oregon. On April 23d, Senator Young, of Kentucky, presented a petition from citizens of his State for grants of land in Oregon,

and the privilege of taking negroes with them. On March 31st, Linn introduced his bill, relative to which the *Baltimore American* said: "Within a year or two past the attention of public men has been turned occasionally to the subject, and its great importance is beginning to be acknowledged. It will cost some trouble to retrieve what has been suffered to go contrary to our interests and rights, through remissness on the part of the nation hitherto." Linn's bill, summarized, was as follows:—That the title of the United States to the territory of Oregon is certain, and will not be abandoned; that the President is authorized to take measures to have the boundaries ascertained and fixed, and in the meantime protect its citizens; that he be authorized to erect a line of military posts from Leavenworth to the Rocky Mountains, for encouragement of emigrants; and that to every white male citizen in Oregon over eighteen a grant of one thousand acres be made, on residence of five years. This was the great Linn bill in its inception, and was the response to citizens wishing to settle in Oregon. It was taken by the people as promise of what would be done if Oregon was secured. They soon began organizing parties to go and take it.

The continued demands of the people and the successful efforts for colonization under Lee, White, Whitman, and independent American settlers, had thus brought the legislative branch of the government to the verge of its power in the matter. The



OREGON CITY IN 1845

From an old print



Floyd bill, and the first Linn bill, although both serving purposes of agitation, failed because their provisions were not clearly within treaty rights. That the executive must act, or that the existing treaty be modified or abrogated, was evident, if any progress toward settlement should be made.

The executive department had from the first, or rather since the days of Jefferson, been cautious, not to say delicate, or weak, in treating the subject. Adams, as has been noticed, at one time called attention of the American minister to the "minuteness" of the concerns involved. In 1818, and again in 1826, the American ministers had offered to Great Britain all the territory north of the parallel of 49 degrees. This was regarded by them as a concession, as at the latter date they claimed the full benefit of American and Spanish discovery above that line. But being repeated a number of times, this became impressed upon the British as the extreme of the American claim, and that if the boundary was to be settled as a compromise, some line between 49 degrees and 42 degrees, the Spanish line, should be struck; and this compromise line seemed to them as "naturally" that of the Columbia. This, to their conception, gave America about four degrees of coast, and Great Britain but little over three of the disputed tract. What could be fairer? It afterward grew upon their mind that the line should run from the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia by the 49th degree, and that they might allow a detached territory



—consisting of the Olympic Mountains — from Gray's Harbor to the Straits of Fuca, and around to and including Port Discovery. The free navigation of the Columbia was also to be included. This, while having the appearance of a concession, was not such in reality; as during times of peace the ports of all friendly countries are considered free under modern usage; and in time of war all treaty rights are broken off.

In this condition of affairs, with none too firm an executive on the American side, and a British rival ready to press his claim to the extreme, the question came to the administration of Harrison and Tyler, entering office in 1841. This was the Whig administration, and by the death of the bluff old Tippecanoe, affairs were devolved very soon upon the Vice-President, who, like many in that situation, have felt themselves less strongly committed to the pledges of their party. The party difficulties of the Whigs need not be alluded to except to notice—which is of great interest as the most critical point in the national part of the history of Oregon—that the conditions brought about made Daniel Webster the central figure of the administration. Webster, whose great abilities and services had been occupied in defending the powers of the Constitution, was about the only solid pillar upon which the administration could depend. To him fell the duty of shaping the public policy of the government, with a view of conciliating all the many inharmonious elements, and uniting them under the

interpretation of the Constitution. With his Federalist party section, and his Hamiltonian construction of the functions of government, went also a strong leaning toward British influences. When he became Secretary of State the entire horizon was charged with the possibilities of disturbance. On the Northeast the boundary between Maine and the British provinces remained unsettled, giving constant occasion for irritation. On the Northwest the boundary was also unsettled, and between the conflicting interests of the British Fur Company and the American settlers disputes might arise that would inflame both British and Americans to war. On the Southwest the Lone Star State was rising to lead the Southern States to clamor for its annexation, even though this brought war with Mexico. As a result of the representations of Slacum, also, President Jackson had been led to seriously consider the national necessity of acquiring San Francisco Bay, and all the territory down to latitude 36 degrees. The question of slavery, and the difference in the laws applicable to the Northern and Southern sections on account of the difference in the system of labor, were also only too apparently driving the country to the verge of internal strife. With the imminent danger of war with Mexico, and the discordance between the North and South, Webster, as a statesman, saw quickly the advisability of closing all disagreement with England, and reaching a good understanding as quickly as possible.

The first occasion was presented with Lord Ash-

burton's mission. Webster was evidently ready to meet Ashburton fully half-way, even upon the Northeastern boundary question. Ashburton was conducting negotiations during the early part of 1842, and the treaty bearing his name was concluded August 9th of that year. As stated by the Earl of Aberdeen, who wrote almost immediately to Webster as to the Northwest boundary: "Lord Ashburton was furnished with specific and detailed instructions with respect to this point of difference [the Northwestern boundary also] between the two governments, as well as the Northeastern"; but these were not taken up, as further stated by Aberdeen: "For reasons which it is not necessary to state here at length, that point, after having been made the subject of conference with the American Secretary of State [Mr. Webster], was not further pressed. The main ground alleged by his Lordship for abstaining from proposing to carry on the discussion with respect to the Northwestern boundary, was the apprehension lest, by so doing, the settlement of the far more important matter of the Northeastern boundary should be impeded, or exposed to the hazard of failure. This ground of apprehension no longer exists." Webster was therefore urged by Aberdeen, renewing the negotiation October 18, 1842, to take up the matter of the Oregon boundary at once with the President; his Lordship concluding that his government was prepared to consider this in "a perfect spirit of fairness, and to adjust it on a basis of equitable compromise."

This letter to Webster, dated at the Foreign Office, London, October 18, 1842, proposing a settlement of the Northwestern boundary, and to settle the fate of Oregon, prepares one for the concessions that we find Webster ready to make. The apprehension noticed, that if the two boundary questions were united the more important matter of the Northeastern would fail, was evidently rather that of Webster. Although he was criticized for yielding too much to Great Britain in Maine, nevertheless the treaty was ratified. He must therefore have contemplated, and proposed to Ashburton, concessions on the Oregon side, even more likely to meet with opposition. Aberdeen was also ready, almost upon the day that the ratifications of the Ashburton treaty were received, which was October 13th, to propose consideration of the Oregon boundary. This showed that the advantage was at least not apprehended as likely to be with America; and also that he was already to some extent advised of what the American concessions would be. His conclusion that the adjustment would be on the basis of equitable compromise indicates that the line of the Columbia was anticipated, as no other line was ever considered by the British as a compromise. Webster's own readiness and expectation that the matter should be concluded is shown by his answering on November 25th the dispatch sent by Mr. Fox, on the 15th; in which he stated that he had laid the matter before the President, who concurred in making the question respecting the Ore-

gon Territory the subject of "immediate attention and negotiation." And added that the President already was intending to make this a feature of his message to Congress. It is not improbable that Webster had outlined a policy to which Ashburton had acceded, and was formulating a plan by which a concession that would be very unpopular at the West might be popular at the South, and thus carry through the Senate. In the same communication—to Fox—he intimated that the negotiation would be transferred to London, concluding—"and, at no distant day, a communication will be made to the United States minister at London."

His plan—as now known—in thus carrying the business across the water was chiefly that he might conduct it himself. He was remaining in Tyler's cabinet with no other object but to finish the policy which he felt to be very important, and in order to conclude this sought the position of minister at London, which was in part a way of leaving the cabinet, but chiefly, no doubt, as the most certain means of completing his diplomacy.

Webster's plan, the historical proofs of which are found in the diary of John Quincy Adams, has not been brought to public notice until recently,\* and

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\* "There was reason for uneasiness in the well-known leaning of Mr. Webster toward certain commercial advantages to be got by treaty from Great Britain, and his low estimate of the value of the Oregon Territory to the United States. We now know that for this and for other reasons the prevalent apprehensions of the time in regard to the Oregon Territory were not groundless. The evidence is now at

would have amounted to a fatal sacrifice of Oregon. His intentions were broad and patriotic, and as he thought would have swept all the clouds from the sky; it was simply to follow up the settlement of the Northeastern boundary by that of the Northwest, and also complete Jackson's views as to San Francisco Bay, and pacify the South by gaining all that was wanted in Texas. A tripartite plan, including Mexico as well as Great Britain, on the basis of mutual interest, with the United States, was to be consummated. The plan was worthy of a great and generous statesman; but was vitiated, even as all the plans and compromises of the Whigs of that day were, by a spirit that was willing to overlook and sacrifice rights.

As stated by Bourne, Webster's plan was held by him very guardedly, but was disclosed to John Quincy Adams, who "wormed it out of Webster on March 25th, in the course of a three-hour interview. It was to yield to England the territory north of the Columbia River, excepting, perhaps, an approach to Puget Sound, if England would promote, or acquiesce in our acquisition of California from San Francisco harbor northward, and the annexation of Texas to the United States." The situation of Eng-

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land that the President and his secretary did contemplate a treaty with England which would involve a surrender of territory on the North Pacific Coast such as no administration hitherto had been willing for a moment to consider. The compensation, however, for the territory surrendered was not, as was then surmised, to be found wholly, if at all, on the Atlantic Coast."—J. R. Wilson.



land in Mexico seemed to make it entirely possible to swing the proposition into place; she was much interested in Texas, even to the extent of suspicion that she intended planting there a colony; so that the ambition to acquire that disputed land might meet with objection and needed England's good offices. Still further English capitalists had made a loan of fifty million dollars on the security of New Mexico and California, indicating a possible alienation of that territory to England in default of payment; and this fact also would make it probable that Mexico would accept the advice and good offices of England in transferring California above, and including San Francisco Bay to the United States. While extensive gains would be made in the South and Southwest, Oregon was to be sacrificed. The line of the Columbia meant the indefinite continuance of the Hudson's Bay Company in Oregon, the suppression of American enterprise, and the exclusion of American commerce. The Americans would have been, at least, placed to a heavy disadvantage. As concluded by Dr. Wilson, it is doubtful whether at any time after the immigration of 1843 reached Oregon the Senate could have been brought to ratify the proposed settlement by Webster; though he evidently relied upon the immense advantages in California and Texas to overcome the popular clamor from the West over the infraction of Oregon.

Fortunately his scheme never reached maturity.

Two plans were devised in order to enable Webster to proceed to London. One was a special mission, to which he should be appointed; the other, if that failed, was a special mission to China, to which Everett, then minister at London, should be appointed, leaving the way clear for Webster to go to London. But the first failed to pass the committee; the second was not relished by Everett, and he declined to accept. Fearing to bring the matter to a public discussion, and finding his endeavors blocked, the great orator resigned his portfolio March 8th. It was a few weeks later that he disclosed to Adams the nature of the treaty that he contemplated negotiating. The difficulties he encountered illustrate the difficulties under our form of government of alienating any part of the domain to which the people have been taught that they had a right; but this passage brought Oregon as near the point of peril as probably any section ever came.

In the summer of 1843 public discussion in England of the Oregon question began to rise. The *Edinburgh Review*, publishing the now celebrated résumé of the situation, stating among other things, "we cannot but imagine that the world must assume a new face before the American wagons make plain the road to the Columbia, as they have to the Ohio." That very summer the Americans were slowly winding past Fort Hall, and on September 3d of the next year, J. C. Calhoun was able to say to the British envoy, Pakenham, "loaded wagons now

travel with facility from Missouri to the navigable waters of the Columbia."

Agitation through one or the other of the houses of Congress was by no means discontinued. On January of 1842, Linn introduced a resolution that the President give notice to put an end to the treaty of joint occupation of the territory now held by the Hudson's Bay Company "to the ruin of the American Indian and fur trader, and conflicting with our inland commerce" with provinces of Mexico. He also presented a petition from citizens of Michigan praying a military occupation of Oregon and its formation into a territorial government. That the administration was not indifferent to the interests of the Oregon emigrants was shown by the dispatch of Lieutenant Fremont, who left St. Louis about June 1st of 1842, with a party of twenty men, to explore the passes of the Rocky Mountains. He examined the South Pass, returned, and came to Oregon the next year, and went to California by the route east of the Cascade Mountains and made a thorough and valuable report. Although trappers and missionaries and emigrants had traveled the South Pass he perhaps deserves the name of Path Finder, as the first to make a topographical survey of the route to Oregon.

In the session of 1843 Wentworth, of Illinois, desired, December 20th, to offer a resolution asking for all correspondence concerning Oregon, but objection was made. Senator Atchison, of Missouri, introduced a bill for inducing settlement in Oregon sub-



GENERAL JOHN C. FREMONT



stantially the same as Linn's—the latter, one of Oregon's ablest champions, having died of heart disease October preceding. Atchison's bill provided a line of blockhouses from a point on the Missouri to the best pass into the Oregon; and a land bill, giving six hundred and forty acres to each white male inhabitant over eighteen, and to a married man, in addition, one hundred and sixty acres on account of his wife, and one hundred and sixty acres for each child either taken thither or born in the territory, conditional upon five years' occupation. He also introduced a bill for a territorial government. On January 8, 1844, Semple, of Illinois, introduced a resolution authorizing the President to give notice abrogating the treaty. On January 4th, in the House, Robert Dale Owen, of Indiana, introduced a bill to the same purport.

On January 26th, in response to requests from Congress, President Tyler stated that negotiations would probably be opened soon, and in view of this he deemed it inexpedient to make public the correspondence relative to Oregon. He was evidently anxious to close the boundary question before ending his term of office, but owing to Webster's scheme, was not in position to make any other offer than of the Columbia River.

This renewed agitation in Congress was undoubtedly due to much public discussion and many public meetings, urging the speedy termination of the treaty and early occupation of Oregon. A popular conven-



tion had been held in July, of the previous summer (1843). The circular calling the convention was issued May 23d; it was sent to all parts of the Union. The object of the convention to be held at Cincinnati, O., was stated to be, "To urge upon Congress the immediate occupation of the Oregon Territory by the arms and laws of the Republic, and to adopt such measures as may seem most conclusive and effective to its immediate and effective occupation, whether the government acts, or not, in the matter." The latter clause was a strong hint that the people of the West might not be retarded in their ambition to reach the Pacific by the slow processes of negotiation, and gave notice that occupation of Oregon would soon become a question of party politics. The circular also showed impatience of diplomatic considerations, and proposed to base whatever action was taken simply upon the Monroe Doctrine, that this continent was no longer open to colonization by European powers. Metaphysical subtleties and supposititious rights, based upon Old World precedents, were not to be considered; the Mississippi Valley wanted Oregon. The convention was attended by over ninety delegates, representing six States of the Mississippi Valley, and adopted, after a three-days' session, resolutions asserting that the right of the United States was good to the Russian possessions, in latitude Fifty-four Forty. Lewis Cass, the distinguished pioneer statesman of Ohio and of Michigan, stated in a letter to the convention that he was heartily in sympathy

with its object, and that, come what might, possession of Oregon should be taken to the full limit. The latitude named, Fifty-four Forty, had a pleasing alliteration, and led the impulsive Western people to feel that if they had not a good right to all that immense region, they would and could make it good.

Robert Dale Owen, in arguing his motion, reflected the new sentiment of the West, and commented somewhat slightly upon the administration. If hostilities were begun in the valley of the Columbia they would be settled by the Western people without the help of the government; and that if to give England notice that she could no longer occupy Oregon meant war, then war must come. Wentworth, of Illinois, opposed the policy of Great Britain and the administration—thus coupling the two as one in this matter. Calhoun and others seem to have considered radical discussion as hurtful, and thought there would soon be people enough in Oregon to take care of themselves. On February 5th, Senator Hannegan presented a resolution, passed unanimously by both branches of the Legislature of his State, Indiana, which showed that during 1843 and '44 the war spirit was rising, and that the alliteration Fifty-four Forty would soon be completed by the phrase "or fight." The resolution was: "Whereas, The district of country known as the Territory of Oregon rightfully belongs to our National Government; and whereas the insatiate avarice and grasping spirit of the British Government seems already disposed to its subju-

gation and conversion; and, whereas, the slightest infringement of national right is a prelude to more high-handed and audacious aggression; therefore

“ Be it Resolved, That our senators in Congress be instructed, and representatives requested, to use their proper instrumentalities for the immediate occupation, organization, and defense of Oregon Territory, ‘ peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must.’ ” A memorial from sixty or seventy Oregon emigrants complaining that they were driven from the Territory by the Hudson’s Bay Company was presented by Atchison.

On February 9th debate took place over purchase of one thousand five hundred copies of Greenhow’s “ Oregon.” It was said by Buchanan that he would never agree to relinquish one foot of Oregon, even up to the old Spanish claim; and by Benton: “ We settled the Territory; the settlement of it was the basis of our claim. He could show that our settlement was prior to that of the British. The British never saw or heard of Oregon till we discovered it, and put the badge of our sovereignty upon it. Then Great Britain jumped down upon, and now she was going to fight out her claim. He would assure the gentlemen that we were not going to have another Northeastern boundary question of this. It was not another Massachusetts and Maine question. There was to be no trembling and yielding in this case, as there was in the former one. No trembling hearts were to be found in the West. This was a Western

question, and the West had a regard for national honor." (Brown's History.)

The prospect of war over the dispute by no means deterred pressing the question. The West rather wished war. It was felt that the "late war" had never been quite properly finished up, and this might be a good opportunity to put the last European power forever from the soil of North America. As the Presidential election drew near, the Democratic party was alive to this state of feeling in the West. By John C. Calhoun, the great leader of the Democracy, acquisition of Oregon was not ardently desired; at least not to the line of Fifty-four Forty. But the annexation of Texas was. He determined, therefore, to accomplish the result, to which Webster had applied himself in the field of diplomacy, but with such signal failure. Not by a *coup d'état*, or the European style; but by a *coup de main*—with the Anglo-Saxon fist. He could carry the solid South by demand for Texas, and the solid West by demand for Oregon. The demand for Texas would mean war with Mexico, but the South was ready for such war. The demand for Oregon might not necessarily mean war with England. This then—Texas and Oregon—became the campaign cry of the election of 1844; and James K. Polk swept the country against the last great champion of the Whigs—Henry Clay. On the boundary question in the Northeast, Northwest, and Southwest the Whigs had little to show. Webster's policy of settlement, if he dared to make it known,

was already so discredited by events that it would have simply added confusion to the cause of the Whigs.

During the campaign, while Tyler was still President, negotiations were renewed, Pakenham arriving from England, and opening the boundary question with Upshur, who had succeeded Webster. The negotiation was, however, delayed on account of the accidental death of Upshur at a test of ordnance. In July it was taken up with J. C. Calhoun, who succeeded to Upshur. Pakenham had substantially nothing to offer but the line of the Columbia, with, however, a detached territory embracing the Olympic Mountains, and besides this any port that the Americans might wish in the British division. These concessions were justly considered as too trivial for notice by Calhoun, and the line of the Columbia inadmissible. He argued boldly for the right to the entire territory up to the Russian line. Pakenham made an able rejoinder, arguing chiefly that America could not be a beneficiary of the Spanish discoveries, since by the treaty of 1790 Spain had yielded to England the right of colonization on the Northwest Coast; and that if the United States claimed anything under the discovery of Heceta at the Columbia, she must admit the principle of progressive discovery; Gray carrying forward the reconnoissance begun by Heceta; but on that principle Vancouver succeeded to, and completed Gray's work. He argued stoutly for the line of the Columbia as a business

necessity to British subjects, saying, “ were Great Britain to abandon the line of the Columbia as a frontier, and to surrender her right to navigation of that river, the prejudice occasioned to her by such an arrangement would, beyond all proportion, exceed the advantage accruing to the United States from the possession of a few square miles of territory. It must be obvious to every impartial investigator of the subject that, in adhering to the line of the Columbia, Great Britain is not influenced by motives of ambition, with reference to extent of territory, but considerations of utility, not to say necessity, which cannot be lost sight of, and for which allowance ought to be made in an arrangement professing to be based on considerations of mutual convenience and advantage.”

The region to which Richard Pakenham thus alludes disparagingly as a few square miles, embraces in fact more than sixty thousand square miles, being more than three-fourths of the State of Washington, or over forty million acres of the finest timber, coal and other mineral lands, and great tracts of the best agricultural country; with the harbors that Wilkes unhesitatingly pronounced the finest he had seen in his whole cruise around the world. If, as there is much reason to believe, this unrivaled area had been retained by England it would have been given in fee to the Hudson's Bay Company; thus setting the stamp of an inferior form of social development upon this among the finest portions of the earth.



That England was contemplating somewhat more active measures to secure the Columbia than mere diplomacy is indicated by an entry in the journal of Father De Smet, of August 17, 1845, at which time he was journeying on the upper branch of the Columbia. He mentions meeting the British officers dispatched from England and conducted to Vancouver by Mr. Ogden, of the Hudson's Bay Company. De Smet not only mentions the meeting, but the mission of the officers. He says: "August 9th. I had here a very agreeable and unexpected interview. As we approached the forests several horsemen issued forth in tattered garments. . . . A small river separated us, and with a smile he [the leader on the other side] said, 'Wait until I reach the opposite shore and you will recognize me'—who proved to be 'the worthy and upright Mr. Ogden. . . . I had the honor and good fortune of making a voyage with him in his own barge from Colville to Vancouver in 1842.

"Mr. Ogden left England in the month of April last, accompanied by two distinguished officers. It was a source of great pleasure to receive recent news from Europe. The Oregon question seemed to me somewhat alarming. It was neither curiosity nor pleasure that induced these officers to cross so many desolate regions and hasten their course toward the mouth of the Columbia. They were invested with orders from their government to take possession of 'Cape Disappointment,' to hoist the British stand-

ard, and erect a fortress for the purpose of securing the entrance of the river in case of war. In the case of the Oregon question, ' John Bull ' without much talk attains his end and secures the most important part of the country ; whereas ' Uncle Sam ' discharges a volley of words, inveighs and storms ! Many years have been passed in debate and useless consultations without one single practical effort to secure his real or pretended rights." In this we may suppose that the missionary was rather carried away with the enthusiasm of the military men ; as he adds soon that between the United States and England the rights of the people to whom the land really belonged, the Indians, would probably be overlooked. It is noticeable, however, that De Smet, speaking under the impulse of an interview with British officers and a Hudson's Bay Company factor, does not allude to the territory in dispute in the terms of R. Pakenham as " a few square miles " ; but as " the best part of the country."



## CHAPTER XII

### THE ACTS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT



WHILE the menaces of a rapidly approaching war period were thus beginning to be heard upon both sides of the ocean, and England was already taking precautionary measures to retain her hold upon that part of Oregon she desired—for in addition to the dispatch of Lieutenants Park and Peel, the man-of-war “*Modeste*” was sent to the Columbia; and, as Ross says, the force of five hundred men sent to the Red River colony was really to be in readiness for trouble in Oregon—the Provisional Government was patiently performing the function of government and taking steps to conciliate British as well as American residents. Its measures were, on the whole, so wise as to be a model for public acts, and to forever silence the criticism that the people cannot legislate, or that the main object of popular government is to supply an ambitious class with fat offices. A greatly condensed abstract of the leading acts and laws of the little Oregon community must therefore be inserted here; showing both the spirit of the Oregon pioneers, and the complete success of their undertaking.

July 5, 1843, as mentioned heretofore, the report of the committee formulating a body of laws, was accepted; thus reënacting the principle of a written constitution founded upon the Magna Charta. Expenses of government were to be met by subscription. Two sections were presented in the report adopted;



the first containing three and the second nineteen articles. By the first section the people of Oregon Territory agreed to adopt laws and regulations until the United States extended jurisdiction over them; the territory to be divided into not less than three nor more than five districts. By the first article no person, demeaning himself in an orderly manner, should be molested in his religious worship. By the second, *habeas corpus*, trial by jury, proportionate representation, and the other civil rights enjoyed by Americans were guaranteed. By the third, schools and the means of education should be encouraged; good faith should be observed with the Indians; their lands or property not taken without consent; but "laws founded in humanity" be made, preventing injustice to them. By the fourth, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude should exist.

By section second, elections, franchise extending to every free male descendant of a white man, twenty-one years old; an executive of three, consisting of a committee of three; a judiciary of supreme judge and two justices of the peace; probate court, and justices of the peace; a recorder, treasurer, and a legislative body of nine persons, elected to their office, were provided. For common practice the laws of Iowa were designated; marriage was permitted to males over sixteen, and females over fourteen, with consent of the parents of those under legal age. A matter of some consequence was fixing the standard bushel of wheat at sixty pounds, without regard

to the bushel measure; as wheat was recognized currency. The land law allowed no individual to claim more than one square mile, nor more than one claim at the same time; nor to hold such claim upon town-sites or water powers, but not to affect claims of any mission of a religious character, of an extent not more than six miles square, and already taken when law was adopted.

The land laws were adopted upon the supposed intentions of the Linn bill, and with special reference to claims made by Dr. McLoughlin, who held two miles along the river at Oregon City; also a tract on Tualatin Plains and on the Clackamas; and these while he was still a resident of Fort Vancouver and an employee and factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. McLoughlin's claim was contested by Rev. Alvin F. Waller, of the Methodist Mission; who employed John Ricord as attorney. Thus was begun an acrimonious controversy, summarized as follows in Brown's history: "It seems that in 1839 Dr. McLoughlin bought out an American citizen by the name of W. C. Remick, who located it as a land claim and had a cooper shop where the Imperial mill now stands. In 1840 Dr. McLoughlin got out some timbers to build a mill, and loaned the timbers to A. F. Waller, of the Methodist Mission, to build a house for [as he understood it] church purposes. In 1843 Dr. McLoughlin employed Wm. H. Gray to build him a house, and as soon as it was finished (1844) he removed his family into it and remained there perma-

nently.”\* It is asserted by Ricord that Waller made an offer, after having lived two and a half years as settler, to compromise with McLoughlin, so as to exclude Abernethy Island, on which the American Milling Company had built, and his two lots, and other unsold lots not to exceed five acres; but the offer was declined by McLoughlin. As Brown continues: “The animosity thus created against McLoughlin by the action of Ricord and others was kept up until the question was brought into Congress by Delegate Thurston, and consummated by the celebrated amendment to the eleventh section of the land law, which robbed the good doctor of his land and caused him infinite trouble until this great wrong was finally rectified by the Oregon Legislature only a short time before his death, through the exertion of Hon. L. F. Grover.”

As to Waller, Brown says: “He was a good, kind-hearted man. He intended to do right, but was a zealot, strongly prejudiced against the Catholic Church. . . . His principal life-work was building up educational institutions, and its result can be seen in the success of the Willamette Institute, to which he contributed more than any other man. He was not fully appreciated until after his death.”

The officers of the Provisional Government for 1843 were: Executive Committee, David Hill, Jo-

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\*N. J. Wyeth in his journal for December 29, 1832, says, “At the Falls the H. B. Co. are erecting a saw mill to which they contemplate adding a grist mill,” Wyeth’s map of the lower Willamette valley made at the same time locates “H. B. Co Mill” at the “Falls.”



HOME OF DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN, OREGON CITY,  
BUILT ABOUT 1847



seph Gale, Alanson Beers; Supreme Judge, A. E. Wilson; Recorder, Geo. W. Le Breton; Sheriff, Jos. L. Meek; Treasurer, W. H. Willson. The population of the Territory was estimated as about twelve hundred British subjects, and one thousand one hundred and forty-two Americans.

In the autumn of the year occurred the affray at Oregon City in which Le Breton was killed by a Molalla Indian named Cockstock. Cockstock had had trouble in regard to a horse, and became exasperated, and riding into the town seemed to be attempting a disturbance. With five others he was armed and painted. Le Breton, attempting his arrest, was stabbed; whereupon Cockstock was killed by a blow of a rifle barrel in the hands of Winslow Armstrong, a mulatto. A white man named Rogers was also wounded by an Indian arrow, from the effects of which he died. Le Breton, badly wounded, was removed to Fort Vancouver, where he succumbed despite most careful medical attention. In consequence of this disturbance a meeting was held March 9th, at the house of La Chapelle, at Champoeg. On motion of W. H. Gray it was "deemed expedient to organize a volunteer company of mounted riflemen to co-operate with other companies, to bring to justice all the Indians engaged in the affair of the 4th of March, and to protect our lives and property against any depredations that may be attempted."

Pursuant to adjournment a meeting was held the 23d at the Willamette Institute, and a company of



twenty-five was organized, with T. D. Keizer as captain; who, soon resigning, was succeeded by Charles Bennett, who had served in the United States Army, and was an efficient officer. The company was called "The Oregon Rangers"; and consisted of Thos. D. Keizer, Isaac Hutchins, John Anderson, Nathan Sitton, Joseph Holman, John Elmons, John B. Keizer, James Martin, K. J. Carson, J. L. Morrison, Webley Hauxhurst, Peter Brainerd, J. M. Garrison, Jas. R. Patterson, Chas. E. Pickett, William Martin, Lindsey Applegate, Chas. P. Malt, Rich. H. Eakin, Joel Turnham, Wm. Delaney, John Ford, Nimrod Ford, David Waldo, Wm. Henry Gray. The rangers were to furnish their own equipment, and in case of actual service were to receive two dollars a day, and for each day's drill one dollar, but to forfeit twice his per diem for non-attendance. It was to be chartered by the "colonial" government; and might be called out by any of the commissioned officers or by any one of the Executive Committee.

The officers of the Provisional Government elected May 14, 1844, were as follows: Executive Committee, Osborn Russell, Peter G. Stewart, W. J. Bailey; Recorder, John E. Long; Treasurer, Philip Foster; Judge, Ira L. Babcock; Sheriff, Joseph L. Meek; Legislative Committee: Tualatin, Peter H. Burnett, David Hill, M. M. McCarver, M. Gilmore; Clackamas, A. Lawrence Lovejoy; Champoege, Daniel Waldo, T. D. Keizer, Robert Newell.

A frank and able message was submitted by the

Executive Committee. Among other matters the fundamental right to government was thus touched upon. "The United States have held out inducements to their citizens, and indirectly encouraged the settlement of this country by them. Consequently we are improving this country by their consent, but without their protection; and it is self-evident that every community has the right to make laws for mutual benefit and protection, where no law exists. . . . At the time of our organization it was expected that the United States would take possession of the country before this time, but a year has rolled around, and there appears little prospect of aid from that quarter, consequently we are yet left on our own resources for protection. In view of the present state of affairs, gentlemen of the assembly, we would recommend to your consideration the adoption of some measures for a more thorough organization." Some of these were to vest the Executive in one person; to divide the judiciary into supreme and probate courts, locate roads, reorganize the military, amend the land laws, leaving out article four, which especially worked a hardship upon Dr. McLoughlin, and to revise the laws of Iowa adopted so as to be applicable to Oregon. Two important measures were passed, one of which remained in force many years, and was a necessity in the situation of the country, with a large savage population. This was a prohibition law, forbidding the sale of ardent spirits, in continuation of the practice of Dr.

McLoughlin. The other was forbidding residence to any negro in Oregon. This was a formidable law, and was passed only after much debate and upon a divided vote. The yeas were Burnett, Gilmore, Waldo, Keizer, Newell, and McCarver (speaker); the nays, Lovejoy and Hill. Slavery or involuntary servitude should not exist; any negro slave brought into the country should in the course of three years become free; any free negro or mulatto coming to the country should leave within two years; if he (or she) failed to leave the country after notice, he should be whipped on the bare back with not less than twenty nor more than thirty-nine stripes; and flogged likewise every six months until he did leave. In the next session of the year, the flogging sections were repealed, a bond for good behavior being substituted. To the credit of Oregon this law was never enforced.

There was not a little discussion at this period whether the Provisional Government could be considered as a valid authority; the question being raised by the new arrivals, and by none more than Peter H. Burnett. He concluded, however, that it was, and from his study of the American practice in formation of governments he derived the principles that were also employed in erecting the State government of California, of which he became first governor. Hence the Oregon government was the progenitor of the California government.

Adjournment was taken until December 16th, in order to learn more particularly the situation re-

garding the boundary. But the Executive Committee was unable to report anything further than the continuance of the dispute as to all the territory between 42 degrees and 54 degrees, 40 minutes; and that the *modus vivendi* by joint occupancy still obtained. In view of this it was earnestly recommended that "Provision be made for framing and adopting a constitution for Oregon, which may serve as a more thorough guide to her officers, and a more firm basis for her laws. It should be constructed in such a manner as to suit the local situation of the country and promote the general interests of the citizens, without interfering with the real or pretended rights of the United States or Great Britain; except when the protection of life and property actually require it." This recommendation was in the interest of the Hudson's Bay officials, who still remained outside the local government. It was especially desirable that McLoughlin should be induced to join in the provisional arrangement, and the Americans therefore sought to smooth the way.

A number of practical needs were mentioned, one of which was for a jail, the committee remarking somewhat drily, "Although the community has suffered very little as yet for want of such a building, and perhaps another year might pass without it being occupied, which is to be hoped might be the case; yet we are assured it is better policy to have the building standing without a tenant than a tenant without the building."

A spirit of great liberality pervades this document, and a lofty ideal, with but a slight touch of American floridity, is pointed in the concluding paragraph: "And we sincerely hope that Oregon, by the special aid of Divine Providence, may set an unprecedented example to the world, of industry, morality and virtue. And although we may now be unknown as a State or power, yet we have the advantages, by united efforts of our increasing population, in a diligent attention to agriculture, arts and literature, of attaining at no greatly distant day, to as conspicuous an elevation as any State or power on the American continent. . . . As descendants of the United States and Great Britain, we should honor and respect the countries which gave us birth; and as citizens of Oregon we should by a uniform course of proceeding, and a strict observance of the rules of justice, equity and republican principles, without party distinction, use our best endeavors to cultivate the kind feelings not only of our native countries, but of all the powers or States with whom we have intercourse."

The only strength of which the young republic felt conscious was that of reasonable and just action, and this message clearly shows that the intention was to follow a course so manifestly fair and wise that not one in the Territory could object to formal affiliation so long as the question of national sovereignty remained open. The Treasurer reported appropriations to the amount of \$967.96, for the year; of which

\$500 was for care of the insane (evidently one person). The highest salary was that of Sheriff, \$111.96; the Judge received \$60.00 for his services. There was a balance of \$242.93 to begin meeting the appropriations.

The moderate and sensible recommendations of the Executive Committee resulted in providing for a Governor. The need of reconciling the mission no longer existed, as the missionaries were now all in hearty accord with the government. This led to something in the nature of politics. A convention was held at Champoeg, at which A. L. Lovejoy, Osborn Russell, George Abernethy, and W. J. Bailey appeared as aspirants for nomination. Lovejoy received the nomination, but Osborn, combining with Abernethy's friends, secured the latter's election; a majority of 98 appearing for him in a vote of 504. The Canadian residents began to appreciate the advantage of participation, and as the Americans had made no restrictions whatever, but were glad to have them, the vote showed a most gratifying advance in the acceptance of the government. In opposition to the American candidate for Treasurer, Francis Ermatinger, of the Hudson's Bay Company, was placed in the field, and ran so successfully, receiving the solid vote of the French, as to be elected by 54 votes out of 448 cast for this office. This was a case in which the Americans won by being defeated. Dr. J. E. Long was elected Recorder; J. W. Nesmith—not yet twenty-five, but having studied law to much



purpose with Peter H. Burnett—Supreme Judge; Marcus Ford, Attorney; the ever popular Jos. Meek, Sheriff; and for Legislative members H. A. G. Lee, W. H. Gray, and H. Straight, from Clackamas County—as the districts now reorganized were called counties; R. Newell, J. M. Garrison, M. G. Foisy, and Barton Lee, for Champoege; M. M. McCarver, J. W. Smith and David Hill, for Tualatin; Jesse Applegate and A. Hendrick, for Yamhill; and John McClure, for Clatsop.

Certificate of election was issued to Abernethy June 12, 1845.

A measure in the interest of further harmonization of the two elements in the country was introduced by Jesse Applegate, and has justly been cited by Elwood Evans as an act as wise as it was liberal. It was to change the oath of office so as to include the British subjects jointly with the Americans, to read: "I do solemnly swear that I will support the organic laws of the Provisional Government of Oregon, so far as the said organic laws are consistent with my duties as a citizen of the United States, or a subject of Great Britain, and faithfully demean myself in office; so help me God."

The results of this considerate bill, which was adopted, have been told by Dr. McLoughlin. He says: "Spring, 1842, the Americans invited the Canadians to unite with them and organize a temporary government; but the Canadians, apprehensive it might interfere with their allegiance, declined, and the project,

which originated with the mission, failed. . . . In 1843 the Americans again proposed to the Canadians to form a temporary government, but the Canadians declined for the same reason as before. . . . The Americans applied again this year to the Canadians in the Willamette Valley (who were about settlers) to join them and form a temporary government; to which they acceded, as they saw from the influx of settlers it was absolutely necessary to do so to maintain peace and order in the country. . . . In the summer [1845] a meeting of the people in the Willamette Valley was called in which the organization was new modeled, and a clause put in by which it was provided that no man could be called to do any act contrary to his allegiance. It struck me this was done to enable us to join the organization and I mentioned this to my colleague, Chief Factor Douglas; who thought as I did that in our present situation and the state of the country it would be advisable to do so. And I was not surprised to find a few days after on my visit to Oregon City that my surmises were correct; as the originator of the clause, who was a member of the Legislature then in session, called on me and proposed to me to enter the organization on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company. After conversing on the subject, and being aware the organization could afford assistance to none but its own members, I told him I would proceed to Vancouver, consult with my colleague, Chief Factor Douglas, and the other officers of the company at that place—

which I did; and Chief Factor Douglas coincided with me in the expediency of our doing so. I returned to Oregon City, and on the Legislature writing me a letter inviting me to join the organization on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company, in a written reply I informed them that I did so."

Thus the little handful of plain Oregon farmers and pioneers, the most of them from the frontiers of the new States, and with little schooling in law or science, but with great perception of justice, accomplished the last result that made their government secure. The Hudson's Bay Company, heir of a long line of royalties and gentlemen, and as vigorous a sprout of British conceptions of a government of inequality as was ever formed, did recognize the power as well as the justice of government by the people. The reason given by McLoughlin—which was the only one that he knew his company would recognize as valid, governing by force and yielding only to force—was that if he did not do so, and thus claim and merit the protection of the Provisional Government, he felt no security but that, in the inflammable state of public feeling, successful efforts to capture, or clandestinely to burn, Fort Vancouver would be made by Americans. To this he was also brought by the effort of Henry Williamson to locate a claim on the north bank of the Columbia. The cool answer to the first overture of the Americans, that the Hudson's Bay Company felt no need of protection, being abundantly able to protect itself, therefore no longer

held. The great monopoly needed protection, and asked it of the Oregon pioneers; and this was amply and generously extended.

The moderation shown on both sides is certainly as remarkable as exemplary; and that the Americans encouraged no act of ill-will, and that none made an effort to capture the British posts, or loot them, as McLoughlin feared, shows a high, or the highest, although unconventional, morality. The Provisional Government, although ridiculed as a simple burlesque of dignified government, and worked up chiefly for the offices, accomplished its purpose of harmonizing all the elements and keeping the little community tranquil and hopeful, while both Washington and London were moved with portentous debate over the Oregon boundary. This initial harmonization led the way to the prompt and decisive defense of the community when the unrest consequent upon a war period affected also the Indian tribes, and hostilities, which were but a prelude to the general Indian uprising, were begun at Waiilatpu.

Although the Americans in Oregon were thus approximating through the desire to embrace all in the Provisional Government, almost the Independent Government that McLoughlin had favored and that Abernethy and the Mission party had so strongly opposed, they were by no means drifting away from the hope of speedy admission to full rights and protection as a Territory of the United States. At this

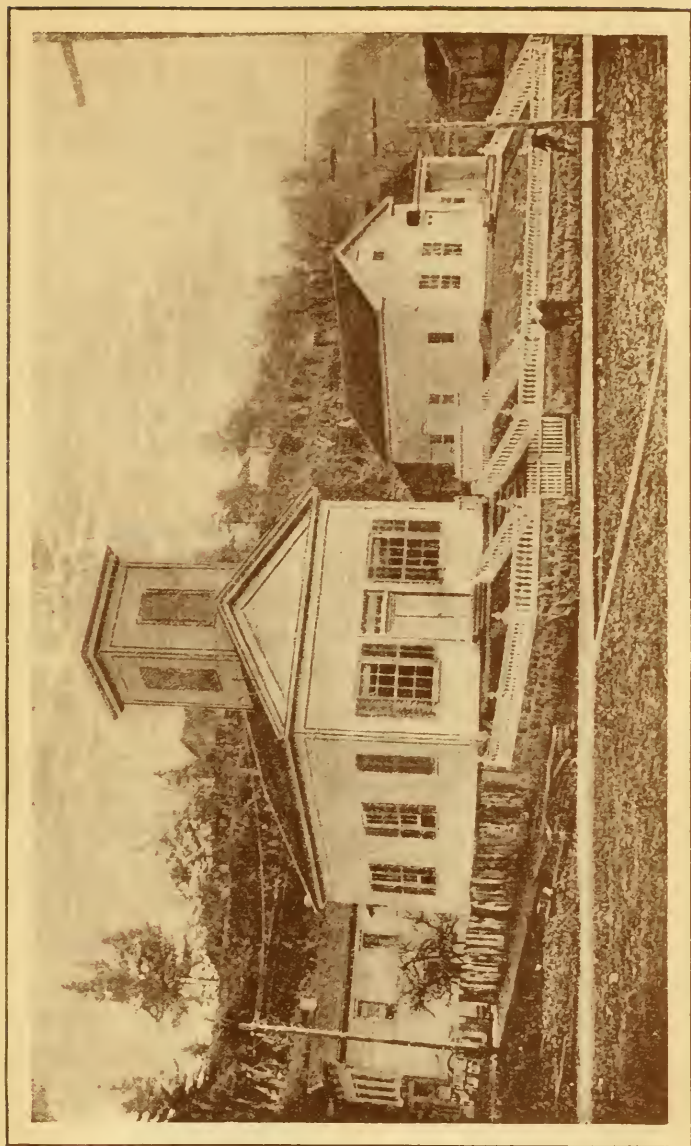
same session a committee consisting of Gray, Applegate, H. A. G. Lee, McClure, and Hill, was appointed to draft a memorial to Congress. This was speedily drawn and forwarded by Dr. White, and presented December 8th, by Senator Benton, the champion of Oregon since the death of Dr. Linn. It was characterized by him as creditable to the body by which it was presented, and "the application worthy of a favorable consideration for its moderation, reasonableness and justice." Probably the moderation of tone was due to none more than to Applegate.

After stating that the Oregon country was settled by the subjects of a crown in common with American citizens between whom no common bond of union exists, and hence liable to serious discords, it proceeds:

"It may naturally be supposed, in absence of any provision having been made by the two governments to prevent or settle any such occurrences, that conflicting interests, aided by ancient prejudices, would speedily lead to results the most disastrous; particularly when it is considered that this mixed population exists in the midst of numerous warlike tribes of Indians, to whom the smallest dissension among the white inhabitants would be the signal to let loose upon their defenseless families all the horrors of savage warfare.

"To prevent a calamity so much to be dreaded, the well disposed inhabitants of the Territory have found it absolutely necessary to establish a provisional and temporary government, embracing all free





FIRST PROTESTANT CHURCH BUILDING ON THE PACIFIC COAST

Erected in 1894 at Willamette Falls.





male citizens; and whose legislative and judicial powers should be equal to all the exigencies that may arise among themselves, not provided for by the government to which they owe allegiance. And we are most happy to inform your honorable body that, with but few individual exceptions, the utmost harmony and good-will has been the result of this, as we conceive, wise and judicious measure; and the British subjects and American citizens vie with each other in their obedience and respect to the laws, and in promoting the common good and general welfare of Oregon.

“ Although such has been the result thus far, of our temporary union of interests—though we, the citizens of the United States, have no cause to complain either of exactions or oppressions at the hands of the subjects of Great Britain, but, on the contrary, it is but just to say their conduct toward us has been most friendly, liberal and philanthropic; yet we fear that a long continuance of this state of things is not to be expected—our temporary government being limited in its efficiency and crippled in its powers by the paramount duty we owe to our respective governments—our revenue being inadequate to its support, and the almost total absence, apart from the Hudson’s Bay Company, of the means of defense against the Indians, who, as recent occurrences lead us to fear, entertain hostile feelings toward the people of the United States.”

The petition then proceeds to remark upon the

more ample means of defense of the British in the Territory; that the criminal code of upper Canada had been extended to Oregon, with officers of the peace; that the Americans in Oregon were laboring under the greatest commercial disadvantages, private capital being insufficient to compete with an old and wealthy corporation, especially as the Americans in Oregon were without ships of war or of commerce, or controlled navigation of the rivers; and concluding, prayed for a district territorial government, protection from the Indians, a land law in accordance with the "Linn Bill"; navy yards and marine depots on the Columbia and Puget Sound; a public mail monthly from Independence, Mo.; commercial regulations to enable the Americans to trade on an equality with the British; military protection to emigrants from the United States to Oregon, and finally, if all these objects were deemed inexpedient, at least a military and naval protection equal to that enjoyed by the British subjects in Oregon.

That all the measures asked for were wise and justifiable, is amply shown by succeeding events. The hostile disposition of the truly powerful and warlike Indian tribes—at least a portion of them—of the upper Columbia, was only too certainly beginning to be developed; the only supply of arms and munitions of war, in case of an uprising, was to be found with the Hudson's Bay Company, as upon actual outbreak of the Cayuse these had to be obtained by purchase on private credit at Vancouver, and by appro-

priation at Fort Walla Walla. That protection equal to that afforded to the British subjects in Oregon could not be reasonably denied was evident enough. That the British Government was preparing ample protection for her subjects is evident enough from the testimony of McLoughlin. He says: "We had the pleasure (1844) to see her Majesty's ship 'Modeste,' Captain Baillie; she anchored opposite Vancouver. . . . I wrote, fall of 1843, to the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company that it was necessary to get protection from the Government for the Hudson's Bay Company's property, and to which, in June, 1845, I received their answer, stating that in the present state of affairs the company could not obtain protection from the government, and that I must protect it the best way I could; and as I had sent an account of Williamson's\* attempt to build on

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\* Hon. John Minto, who was afterwards a partner of Williamson's, in the Willamette Valley, and has taken a deep interest in making clear the attempt of his friend to find a home north of the Columbia, says: "In the Williamson case he [Dr. McLoughlin] was confronted by a man as clean and upright as himself, claiming, as a citizen of the United States, as good a right to take open land for a home as the Hudson's Bay Company had to occupy it in their business as licensed fur traders. As to the implied right Dr. McLoughlin mentions Williamson felt (and I believe he was right) that supported by the organic law adopted by the body of free residents of Oregon for protection, peace and order, until the United States should extend its jurisdiction and give the land to the settlers, as its treatment of the Linn Bill strongly intimated it would, his implied right to 640 acres was much stronger than that of the Hudson's Bay Company to thirty-five miles from east to west along the north bank of the Columbia River, reaching back as far as their stock traveled."

Of Williamson himself Minto makes this appreciative statement:

the premises of the Hudson's Bay Company, and of my proceedings on the occasion, to her Majesty's consul, General Millar, at Oahu, calling on him for protection for the Hudson's Bay Company's property, to which he did not even reply, though he could have done so by the vessel which conveyed the letter, . . . I was much surprised a few days after the arrival of Chief Factor Ogden, by the arrival of Lieutenant Peel and Captain Parks, who handed me a letter from Captain Gordon, of her Majesty's ship 'America,' from Nisqually, and stating he was sent by Admiral Seymour, who wrote me to the same pur-

"As to Henry Williamson, whose act I construe as the beginning of the end of the Hudson's Bay rule over Oregon, his prudence soon got the better of his heart in the contest, and he let it be known that he left his claim in abeyance rather than be the cause of a disturbance, but expected to assert his rights later. He was as fine a specimen of young, selfreliant manhood as I have ever known, as honorable as any member of the Hudson's Bay Company, from the president to the poorest servant. Son of a prominent stock-breeder of Hamilton County, O., he left La Porte, Ind., in the spring of 1844 in company of James Hunt. They were friends and comrades, both members of the Baptist church."

Mr. Minto has no criticism for Dr. McLoughlin, who "knew the business interests he represented were (by the action of forming the Provisional Government) being drawn between the upper and the nether millstones of two national powers." On the contrary the policy of the great Chief Factor is commended. "His business judgment and humanity alike impelled him to turn away from Colonel Vavasour's suggestion of bringing British troops via the Selkirk settlement and slaughtering the Americans then in Oregon. He continued his humane and conciliatory course." Minto, however, has not so high an estimate of James Douglas, who was "the leader" of "the pro-British party" at Vancouver, between whom and McLoughlin the "bonds" were severed by that "humane and conciliatory course."

port to assure *her Majesty's subjects in the country of firm protection.*" This was very unexpected to McLoughlin, and was quite embarrassing after his decision to join the Provisional Government; and he was at some loss whether to accept the protection of British vessels of war, but upon conference with Douglas—who had a much more pliable conscience and less sense of honor—he decided that he might and should. All of which shows how wisely the Provisional Government acted in asking a speedy erection of a territorial government in Oregon; their faithful effort to preserve peace would have gone like a house of cards if it had suited British diplomacy to strike a blow in Oregon. The entire situation was indeed underneath the suspended sword.





## CHAPTER XIII

### PROGRESS OF IMMIGRATION

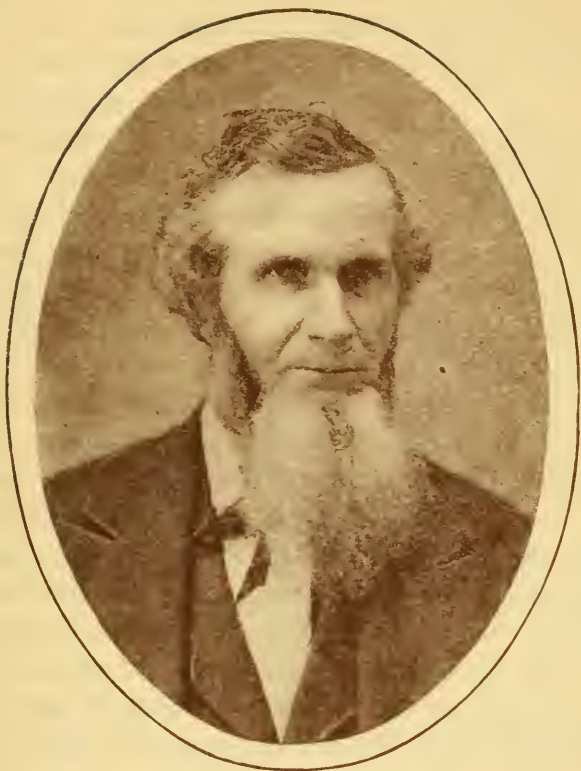


UNDER the tremendous agitation getting fairly started in 1844, and continuing thereafter until the Oregon boundary was finally settled in 1846, emigration to Oregon was greatly stimulated. Many among the more adventurous decided to go to Oregon and place possession of the country beyond all danger of dispute. Benton now seldom lost an opportunity to urge the necessity of securing the route to the Pacific and to the Orient by way of the Columbia; St. Louis, he thus declared, should be the emporium of the West, and be connected with the Old World of China and the Indies. In a public address at St. Louis, October 19, 1844, he made what has since proved a remarkable prediction: "I say the man is alive, full grown, and listening to what I say (without believing it perhaps) who will yet see the Asiatic commerce traversing the north Pacific Ocean—entering the Oregon River—climbing the western slope of the Rocky Mountains—issuing from its gorges—and spreading its fertilizing streams over our wide-extended Union! The steam-boat and the steam car have not exhausted all their wonders. They have not yet found their amplest and most appropriate theaters—the tranquil surface of the north Pacific Ocean, and the vast inclined plains which spread east and west from the base of the Rocky Mountains. The magic boat and the flying car are not yet seen upon this ocean and upon this plain, but they will be seen there; and St. Louis is

yet to find herself as near Canton as she is now to London, with a better and a safer route by land and sea to China and Japan than she now has to France and Great Britain.”

The immigration of 1844 numbered 475, as stated by McLoughlin. The main body started from Independence under General Cornelius Gilliam, who had seen service in the South. He was accompanied by his family, in which were married children; and also by his sister and her husband, William Shaw. There were other parties, one of which was commanded by Major Tharp. In Tharp's company was William M. Case, who took a vital part in the Americanization of California and has since been a leading citizen of Marion County.

Gilliam's company—as all the companies started with a strict civil and military organization—suffered greatly from delays in crossing the frontiers; and from the very cause that Applegate mentioned as obviated by the attentions of Dr. M. Whitman. This led to the usual dissatisfaction, and the gradual division of the train into companies, and finally into mere squads, and some squads dividing into single families, and the young men after reaching Fort Hall striking out ahead for assistance in bringing in the families with which they were connected. At this British post one of the immigrants—Father Cave—inquired of Captain Grant whether they could take their wagons through. He replied: “Last year the emigrants asked me the same question; I replied that



GENERAL JOEL PALMER





I thought not; we found it hard to get through with pack horses. But they went; and the next we heard of them they were on the Columbia with their wagons. You Yankees go wherever you please."

Nevertheless, owing to the late start, the extended journey, and being unaccompanied by experienced guides, many of the families suffered greatly before reaching their destination, and it was not until the New Year that all were housed on the Willamette. To a very valuable synopsis of this immigration, by John Minto, we are indebted for a roll of the men, and some sketch of the arrivals. As will be seen, Oregon owed to the immigration of 1844 some of her best and most substantial citizens. From this list the following are selected as representative.

Alanson Hinman, a native of New York State, engaged in school teaching by Dr. Whitman, and stationed at the Dalles at the time of massacre; also in the Willamette Institute; later embarked in mercantile business at Forest Grove; served as collector at Astoria under Johnson and Grant. Now living at Forest Grove.

Joseph Watt, who started for Texas to assist in establishing an American government, but changed his course to Oregon; settled at Amity, in Yamhill County, engaged extensively in sheep and stock raising, and promoted woolen manufactures. A leading farmer and citizen.

R. W. Morrison, from Virginia and Missouri, became a settler on Clatsop Plains, engaging in saw

milling and dairying, and founding a well-known family.

John Minto, a native of England, but once in America—or even before, as his father was a “patriot”—he became the most stalwart of Americans, illustrating again that America is the truer home of the liberty-loving English yeoman. Mr. Minto became one of the leading farmers and stock raisers of Marion County and of eastern, or middle Oregon; discovered, or rediscovered, the “Minto Pass,” was a leading promoter of the Oregon State Fair, an editor of the *Willamette Farmer*, one of the founders of the Pioneer Association, and a large contributor to the publications of the Oregon Historical Society. He is founder also of one of the leading families of the Willamette Valley.

James Marshall, the discoverer of gold in California.

William M. Case, as before mentioned.

Willard H. Rees, a man of brilliant natural abilities, a printer at St. Louis, and a cultivated writer. Settled near Butteville, Marion County. One of the leading spirits in the Pioneer Association, to whom much is owed in the way of historical data.

Captain Charles Bennett, from the United States Army; second captain of the Oregon Rangers; served and was killed in the Walla Walla Valley in the general Indian war.

Henry Williamson, who attempted the settlement north of the Columbia.

Nathaniel Ford, captain of Independence Company; a leading settler and political leader in Polk County.

Rev. E. E. Parrish, compiler of a valuable journal of the emigration, and settler at Parrish Gap, Marion County.

Captain William Shaw, as above; a soldier in the Florida war and under Jackson in 1812.

Cornelius Gilliam, as above, and served also in the Florida war, and member of the Missouri Legislature. Was commander of the Oregon forces in the Cayuse war, during which he was killed by the accidental discharge of a musket. David Goff, Jacob Hoover, Daniel Clarke, Elisha McDaniel, Joshua McDaniel, Mountain Robinson, Martin and William Gillahan, Westley and Luke Mulkey, J. Roland, I. N. Gilbert, and others, deserve and will receive extended notice as the chronicles of the immigrations are fully recorded.

One group, however, should be noticed by itself. This consisted of Colonel Michael T. Simmons, William Shaw, George Crawford, George Waunch, David Crawford, Ninian Eberman (of '43), Selburn Thornton, David Parker, Michael Moore, John Hunt, David Kindred, Samuel B. Crockett, and George Bush, Henry and James Owens, and Henry Williamson. Colonel Simmons was perhaps the leading spirit. Simmons was a native of Kentucky, a typical southwestern man, about thirty years old on his arrival in Oregon, and also head of a family. On reaching

the Columbia he was delayed at Washougal on account of the approaching confinement of his wife, and finally found accommodations at Vancouver in a small hut. Here he felt the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company to be seeking to keep him away from the country north of the Columbia; and found his independent spirit rising to discover for himself what was there. To this conclusion he was also moved by George Bush, a colored man, but free, who also had been a soldier with Jackson at New Orleans. Bush was well-to-do, and had assisted Simmons and others to come to Oregon. He was in every way a reliable and generous man; and intelligent withal. The law excluding negroes from Oregon had just been passed, and he preferred a settlement in Washington, which was more likely to become British territory. Explorations were made during the winter and spring, and in October settlement was made at Tumwater, at the head of Budd's Inlet. These first settlers of Washington were Colonel Simmons and family, James McAllister and family, David Kindred and family, Gabriel Jones and family, George Bush and family, and Jesse Ferguson and Samuel B. Crockett. On Simmons's claim was laid out a town called New Market. The others mentioned, but not included here, assisted in the explorations. Immigration of 1844 was thus of great importance in extending the claims of the United States north of the Columbia. The policy of Benton to put "thirty thousand rifles in the valley of the Oregon," was thus already oper-

ating to make American occupation a fact,\* and to place a soldier, in the person of the settler, wherever a British trader might be.

The jurisdiction of the Provisional Government was extended over Washington—as now known—but this was not allowed to operate to the disadvantage of the magnanimous Bush. One of the first concerns of Simmons, who was sent from that district to the Oregon Legislature, was to secure passage of a bill removing the race disabilities of his neighbor and friend. Thus, though the laws against colored per-

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\* Medare G. Foisy, a pioneer printer of Oregon, arrived in 1844 at Spalding's mission station, Lapwai. Early in the fall of that year he worked on the little printing press obtained as a gift from a Sandwich Island mission, and printed from copy prepared by Spalding, the New Testament in the Nez Perce language. This antedated the Oregon *Spectator* by two years. Foisy was a native of Quebec, of French lineage, and reared in the Roman Catholic faith. He went West as a lad, learned the printer's trade and worked on the St. Louis *Republican*. In 1844 he came with Father Joset to the Flathead country, and thence to Lapwai, and soon after to the Willamette. He served in the Legislature, 1845, assisted drawing up the new constitution and laws, and afterwards spent some time in California assisting in the American conquest and formation of a free State, strongly opposing slavery. He returned to Oregon, where he passed the remainder of his life (Willard H. Rees).

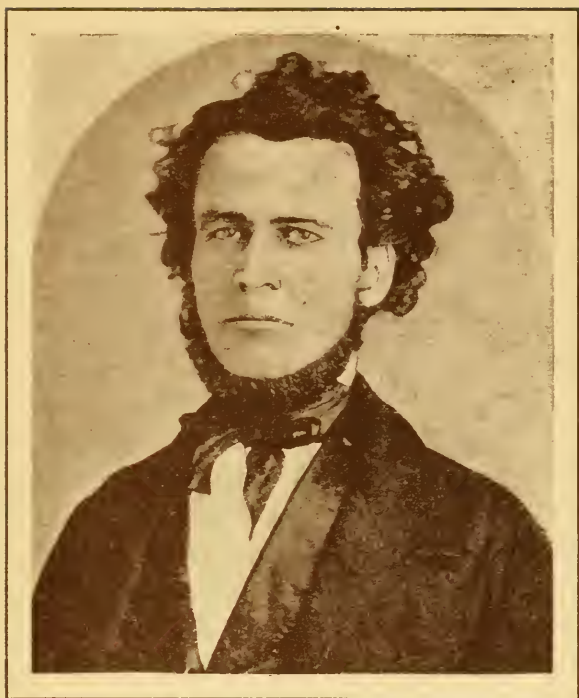
Among the arrivals in 1844 by sea was Horace Holden, who had been a sailor in the South Pacific, but suffered shipwreck nearly ten years previous and was left about three years with the natives upon the desolate islet charted as Lord North's island. After his rescue, in which he suffered unparalleled hardships, he returned to the Pacific, settling at the Sandwich Islands, with the intention of engaging in silk culture; but learning of the struggles of the Americans in Oregon, decided to remove hither and assist in winning this country to the United States. He settled near Salem, becoming a pioneer in horticulture.



sons looked black enough, in their practical relations the actual persons of negro blood were treated with great respect.

In 1845 the emigration rose to such proportions as to pass all the limits of such a work as this to even mention the representative men. From tens and hundreds the figures now passed to the thousands—three thousand being the estimate of McLoughlin.

By Steven Staats a company of sixty-one wagons and about three hundred persons, commanded by Colonel T'Vault, with John Waymire and James Allen as lieutenants; another commanded by Solomon Tetherous; and still another by Samuel Barlow, are mentioned. It was this year that an effort to find a shorter route to the Dalles was undertaken by Stephen Meek, who proved to be an unreliable guide, and himself became lost; the draggled immigrants at last succeeding in passing through the John Day country by the help of Indians. Of this immigration was Samuel R. Thurston, first Delegate from Oregon to Congress; Joel Palmer, afterward General and a leading figure in the settlement of Indian troubles and inaugurating the reservation system, and in the political and railroad history of a later day. Wm. J. Herren, John Durbin, Rufus Riggs, John Fleming, James McMillan, and many others well known in the industrial or political history of the State, were immigrants of this year. Among these J. C. Avery is especially mentioned by Staats, as the founder of the city of Corvallis.



SAMUEL R. THURSTON  
First Delegate to Congress from Oregon.



During this year the first effort was made to open a road over the Cascade Mountains, near the base of Mount Hood, on the south side. S. K. Barlow, who remarked that God never made a mountain without some place for a man to go over it, or under it, with eighteen men and women, besides children, struck out from the Dalles with thirteen wagons, sixteen yoke of cattle, and seven horses. It was not until December 23 that the party emerged from the mountains and forests and arrived at Foster's farm—the haven of the later immigrants. The wagons were not brought through, but cached on the top of the divide. Those joining with Barlow and his family were William Rector, J. C. Caplinger, and Mr. Gessner, and their respective wives; and John Bacon and William Bacon; although Rector returned to the Dalles. The road was cut through the next season, and although so steep on its western passes as to require that wagons be let down some of the hills by means of ropes passed around trees, which still bear the marks of the cords, or stayed by small trees tied to the hind axle, this completed the all-wagon route from the Missouri to the Willamette, and was in constant use by the after arrivals.

A census taken in June of 1845 showed a total population of two thousand one hundred and nine. This was before the arrival of the immigration of that year.

The immigration of 1846 was probably not so great, but undoubtedly numbered over two thousand.

It is stated by J. Quinn Thornton, who came to Oregon that season, that seven hundred and fifty wagons were counted on the plains, some of which were for California, but the most for Oregon. In his own company there were seventy-two wagons, one hundred and thirty men, sixty-five women, one hundred and twenty-five children, or three hundred and twenty immigrants. This would average about four persons to a wagon. Trains of sixty wagons have also been mentioned having about three hundred persons. But at four to the wagon the seven hundred and fifty wagons would indicate about three thousand persons. Of the five thousand persons stated by Miss Barlow, to have left the Missouri border the previous year, three thousand reached Oregon; the remainder turning back, or going to California. Of three thousand, or over, actually on the plains in 1846, two thousand would probably have reached Oregon. Among those starting for Oregon this season was ex-Governor Boggs, who intended making Oregon his home, but taking the Applegate "cut-off," found himself at length much nearer the California settlements, and became a Californian.

The strongly patriotic motive animating this immigration is indicated by the following description of the wagons, as given by Thornton: "The wagons were generally new, strong and well painted. All were covered with either linen or cotton drilling; some of the covers being painted or thoroughly saturated with boiled linseed oil, so as to more effectually

exclude the rain. Some of the wagons had 'California' painted on the cover; some of them displayed 'Oregon,' in letters so large that even he who ran might read; some added in yet larger letters, 'The whole or none'; and still others, 'Fifty-four Forty, or Fight.' "

Thus the American wagon was still the symbol and the main agent of national growth. That this wagon has now become the steam car does not diminish its significance, nor discredit its progenitor.

The distinguishing feature of this immigration was the effort to find "cut-offs" affording easier passages than that by the Columbia. It had been the ambition of Dr. White to establish an all-wagon route into the Willamette, and he considered that he did so in proposing the use of an old Hudson's Bay and Indian trail reported by Thomas McKay, but entirely forgotten until rediscovered by John Minto, many years after, and now bearing his name. Applegate and others, by a hasty survey in the summer, believed that a more expeditious route through the Humboldt Valley, and thence to the Rogue River, could be found. To this Governor Boggs and Thornton and many others turned off; Thornton and the larger portion persisted in coming to Oregon, although through a portion of the Sacramento Valley; and as stated by him, but one whole wagon passed over the Umpqua Mountains and through the Canyon. The use of this route was undoubtedly misjudged, and gave rise to life-long animosities. Among others be-



sides Judge Thornton arriving this year were Dr. McBride, General Simpson, and Mrs. Tabitha Brown; and many others who rose to usefulness, or even eminence, in the young commonwealth; some of whom will be mentioned as the institutions and government of the Territory and State are more particularly chronicled.

A pioneer by sea of 1846 was Clement Adams Bradbury, from Maine; who had been a sailor in the whaling grounds of both the North and South Pacific. After a sojourn in Australia he resumed whaling, and suffered shipwreck in Bering's Sea; being rescued was brought to the Sandwich Islands, and from Honolulu came with Captain Crosby to the Columbia.

At the June election of 1847, before the arrival of the immigrants of that year, there was a total vote cast for governor of 1074 (Brown), indicating a total population of five or six thousand. The immigration of 1847 added between four and five thousand more.

The immigration of 1847 was on many accounts the most important hitherto. It was estimated at between four and five thousand; by Ralph C. Geer, of the immigration itself, as nearer the latter than the former figure. In this company were included many of the men who later became leaders; much improved stock was brought, greatly increasing the value of the farm animals, and the first grafted fruit was imported by Luelling, in what has been called "the traveling nursery." By Geer, Cox and others a quantity of seeds of apple, peach and other fruit trees was brought, which, being planted, afforded in course of time substantial roots for grafting purposes, and in some cases produced fine varieties of seedlings, the Cox Cling peach being from the store of pits brought by Mr. Cox.

The following is a condensation from the valuable pioneer address

of Ralph C. B. Geer, delivered in 1879 at the Oregon State Fair Grounds:

"The emigration of 1847, like all former emigrations, was composed of men and women who were willing to brave all manner of hardships for the purpose of finding a better country to live in; some, and not a few either, were willing to undergo the toilsome and tedious trip for the sake of finding a more healthy country. For that reason alone I sold my little farm in Knox County, Illinois, bid farewell to civilization, as everybody thought at that time, and started to cross 'the Great American Desert.' Others were influenced by the inducements held out by the general government in the shape of large land grants to all actual settlers, and the accounts given by writers from here and elsewhere, and also by the lectures of reliable men who had seen this beautiful, and to me, unequaled country.

"We left the Missouri the 6th of June, and when we got to Wolf Creek we organized by electing Joel Palmer\* captain, and the usual officers that belong to such an organization. When we organized we had about eighty-five wagons, and in the Nemaha country we overtook what was called the Chicago Company, headed by Uncle Thomas Cox, which increased our company to ninety-nine wagons [which, however, was later divided]. . . . When I left Knox County, Illinois, the Democratic Central Committee had a small wrought-iron cannon, made by a Whig, to celebrate the election of Henry Clay, in 1844, and when he was beaten gave it to the Democrats, and they named it the "Young Democrat," and gave it to me to bring to Oregon. It was a real screamer to talk—it could be heard for fifteen or twenty miles, and old mountaineers said that if we fired that every night after we camped Indians would not trouble us. And I think it was true, for we adopted that plan, and no stealing only when we neglected to let her bark. . . .

"That camp was the finest camp of pioneers I ever saw. It contained ninety-nine wagons, about four hundred men, women and children, from six to sixty years of age, representing all the trades and professions. I think that camp was a good average of the pioneers of 1847. . . . From the best information I am able to obtain I think the emigration of 1847 numbered five thousand souls. . . . The emigrants were scattered, and not very thinly scattered, either, over at least five hundred miles of road. . . . The pioneers of 1847 spread all over this (Willamette) valley, and Umpqua, thereby enabling the people to establish schools all over the land." Mentioning some of the individuals of this immigration

\* Palmer's second trip to Oregon.

Mr. Geer says in different places: "Three days before we got to the Soda Springs we passed by the grave of Elias Brown, who died June 17, 1847, of mountain fever; father of J. Henry Brown, our efficient secretary [also author of Brown's History of Oregon]. At the crossing of the Umatilla we met F. W. Geer, of Butteville, who told us how it rained in the Cascade Mountains and what we had to encounter. We did not realize the situation then, but did afterwards.

"The stock interests were advanced by the introduction of fine horses, cattle and sheep, by enterprising pioneers of that year of whom I will speak. Uncle Johnny Wilson, as we used to call him, brought a drove of Durhams from Henry Clay's herd at Blue Grass Grove, Ill. . . . He also brought as fine mares as could be bought in Illinois. . . . Captain Benser brought a herd of fine cattle, and improved the herds of the Columbia bottoms vastly. J. C. Geer, Sr., brought a fine cow of Henry Clay's favorite stock. . . . M. L. Savage brought old George that year [a record making race horse]. . . . Sheep industry received a big lift that year. Mr. Fields brought a flock of fine sheep from Missouri and stopped with them near Uncle Dan. Waldo's. Fields and his wife both died under a large fir tree with measles. The sheep were sold at auction in small lots; they proved to be superior sheep, to say the least. Uncle Headrick, William Turpin and Johnson Mulkey brought a fine flock. . . .

"The emigration brought everything, nearly, from a paper of pins to a four foot burr. Mr. Haun, of Haun's mill notoriety, in Missouri, brought the pair of mill burrs. . . . Uncle Thomas Cox and William, his son, brought a respectable store across the plains and opened out at Salem the first store south of Champoege. William also brought some peach pits and planted them and originated the celebrated Cox Cling peach. Uncle A. R. Dimick, the originator of the Dimick potato, brought the seeds of the Early Shaker Blue potato from Michigan. But the greatest undertaking, and one that was crowned with success, and one that contributed the most to the name and fame of Oregon, was 'The Traveling Nursery' brought across the plains by the late Henderson Luelling in 1847. 'If a man is a benefactor to his race who makes two spears of grass grow where one grew before, what is he to his State who makes luscious pears, cherries, plums and apples grow where only poor seedlings, or none, grew before? . . . That load of trees contained health, wealth and comfort, for the old pioneers of Oregon.' [They were brought planted in light boxes, about seven hundred trees and shrubs, from

twenty inches to four feet high each, requiring to be watered and protected on the entire journey, and taken up and wrapped at the Dalles for the transit down the Columbia. A remarkable undertaking.]

Mr. Geer concludes: "Excuse me when I tell you that I brought one bushel of apple and one-half bushel of pear seeds, which went far toward supplying this coast with trees, especially pear trees, for I furnished Luelling with stock and he furnished me with buds from his traveling nursery, which enabled both of us to furnish cultivated trees at an early day, and certainly that traveling nursery was a God-send to me and mine."

Joseph Carey Geer, father of the above, was an immigrant of that year; other sons, besides Ralph C., are F. W., J. C., Lucien and Joel Palmer Geer. This is one of the typical old Oregon families, numbering at the death of the grandsire in 1881 one hundred and sixty-seven.

As to antecedents and character of the emigrants to Oregon, Dr. Whitman wrote to the Secretary of War of those of 1843: "The emigrants are from different States, but principally from Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, and New York. The majority of these are farmers, lured by the prospect of government bounty in lands, by the reported fertility of the soil, and by the desire to be among those who are planting our institutions upon the Pacific Coast. Among them, also, are artisans of every trade, comprising, with the farmers, the very best material for a new colony." A description from personal knowledge by Thornton of '47—Whitman's letter was not made public until long after Thornton penned this—agrees closely. He says: "Many were in pursuit of health. Some were actuated by the mere love of change; many more by a spirit of enterprise and venture; and a few, I believe, knew not exactly why they

were thus on the road. With these reasons was, more or less, mixed up a very important element—a desire to occupy the country as a basis of title in the dispute between the Government of the United States and that of Great Britain. . . . Nor were the people less different in their general appearance, manners, education, and principles. There were representatives from nearly all the States from Maine to Missouri, and from the great lakes in the North to the greater gulf in the South. The majority, however, were plain, honest, substantial, enterprising, and of good principles. They were, indeed, very much superior to those who generally settled a new country, and they were for the most part persons, the loss of whom was felt and regretted by those they left behind.”

In a brief paper published in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* of March, 1900, Professor Thomas Condon treats of the pioneer movement across the plains from Missouri to Oregon as a process of selection. In indicating a basis here for the operation of this principle he says: “Let us now turn to the restless people of the frontier who wanted to go to Oregon, and inquire what their mental picture of the great barriers of the journey was. At this time, 1842, these restless people might be found from Eastern Tennessee to Western Missouri. In their view the Rocky Mountain barrier was not a single line of mountains, but a complex system of ranges like the one that separated Eastern Vir-



ginia and the Carolinas from the valley of the Ohio, with whose character they were familiar. They clearly apprehended the difficulties of such mountain travel, without roads or bridges, without shops for repairs, or towns for the repurchase of supplies run short. They saw plainly the necessity of starting with wagons loaded for the whole journey, and of getting through before winter. They knew, too, that having passed the Rocky Mountain barrier, a vast desert plain, extended from the western slope of the Rockies, only to bring them to another barrier, the Cascade range, which if not higher was at least steeper in its approaches. . . . In naming over the principal forms of danger that went to make up the outlook of the road to Oregon in the early forties, one must be named—one more dreaded than all the rest—the continued exposure to Indian attack. Such was the dark picture the journey overland presented to the men and women of the frontier, who yet waited restlessly for their chance to try it.

“ Now, in spite of all these dangers of the way, the wagon trains were organized; were loaded with their precious burdens of life and hope, did cross these mountain chains and the long stretches of desert between them; did reach and people Oregon. There remains the inquiry: What manner of people were they who dared to do this? For surely it was the coming of the women and children of these pioneer wagon trains that won Oregon for the Stars and



Stripes." He thus summarizes the conclusion of his inquiry:

"We have thus forced upon us the conviction that the pioneer migration across the plains to Oregon consisted almost wholly of frontier people; that from their organized trains the rich excluded themselves; the dependent poor were kept aloof, and those subject to chronic sickness or feeble health at once accepted the inevitable conclusion. Now with these ineligible groups cancelled we may well ask, Who were left to go to Oregon? Well, the proposed migration thus shorn of elements that did not fit the heart of the movement, there remained scattered along the frontier several thousands of the very material for pioneering. Men in the prime of life with small families, who were themselves accustomed to the management of teams; were familiar with desert travel and mountain climbing; were accustomed to Indian alarms, many of them to Indian fighting; and all of them accustomed from childhood to the use of the rifle—these were restlessly waiting the time for movement."

As the later emigrations continued, considerable deductions must be made from the element of selection as excluding the sick and feeble. Not only was it sought by many intending emigrants to escape the malaria of the Mississippi Valley, but even consumption. It was on this account that the brilliant family of the Simpson's came to Oregon; but the rule holds, notwithstanding increasing exceptions of each of the

agencies excluding the unfavorable from the Oregon pioneers. In a further discussion before the Pioneer Association, Professor Condon has shown that the discipline of the movement across the plains had all the valuable effects of a long military period, and fused the heterogeneous elements into one people, characterized by singular liberality, national and local spirit, and strong sentiments of humanity.

The estimate placed by Professor Young upon the services of the pioneers to their country and civilization, will undoubtedly be that of history. He says — (Oregon Trail Number *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, December, 1900): “The early Oregon pioneers not only gained the first secure foothold for the American people on the Pacific Coast, but their movement opened the way to American occupation, and in itself counted as an occupation of that realm for American civilization. They moved across the continent at an auspicious time, and so were able to influence, if not to shape, the course of great events touching the widening of the American dominion on the Pacific. It was all done so quietly, so efficiently, at so comparatively small cost, that the world has yet to connect the momentous results with a cause seemingly so inadequate. As the American people come to realize that their distinctively national achievement so far, next to that of maintaining a national integrity, has been that of preëmpting and subduing an adequate dominion and home for a civilization, they will revere

the services of those who made the transcontinental migrations in the thirties, forties and fifties. The glory that belongs to the participants in those migrations is the peculiar birthright of the patriotic Oregonian. The passage from the Atlantic slope to the Pacific of these first American households bearing the best embers of Western civilization must ever stand as a momentous event in the annals of time."

As a fine tribute to these pioneers the following is cited from an address of Elwood Evans, inserting also the spirited stanza quoted by him: "Surely these children of the great republic, though at the time rejected by their country and sometimes derided for their singleness of purpose in Americanizing this region, have earned and secured a lasting, living, brilliant page in history:

"Upbearing, like the ark of God  
The Bible in their van,  
They went to test the truth of God  
Against the fraud of man.  
They trod the prairie as of old.  
Their fathers sailed the sea,  
And made the West, as they the East,  
The Homestead of the Free.'"

The January number, 1843, of *Fisher's Colonial Magazine*—British—contained the following reference to the disposition of the British population of Oregon to hold the country for England, the efforts of Americans to settle the Willamette, and the mistake of the Hudson's Bay Company in allowing American missionaries in Oregon: "Any demonstration in the maintenance of our rights would be well supported by members of the present population, originating in the race that constituted the servants of the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies. That such a contingency may soon arise

there is much reason to apprehend, as disclosed by the following item from an American newspaper: 'We have the Northeastern boundary settled, and so will we have soon the Northwestern, for our countrymen are fast establishing themselves in that country, which will soon constitute the surest rights of possession and the best title.' This alludes to a settlement made about a hundred miles from the Pacific, on the banks of the Willamette. . . . By a strange and unpardonable oversight of the local officers of the company (H. B.) missionaries from the United States were allowed to take religious charge of the population, and these artful men lost no time in introducing such a number of their countrymen as reduced the influence of the small number of original British settlers to insignificance." It was in accord with a purpose on the part of the London directors, probably, to correct the error of the local officers, that religious charge of the population by a clergy, not prepossessed in favor of American occupancy, was encouraged.



## CHAPTER XIV

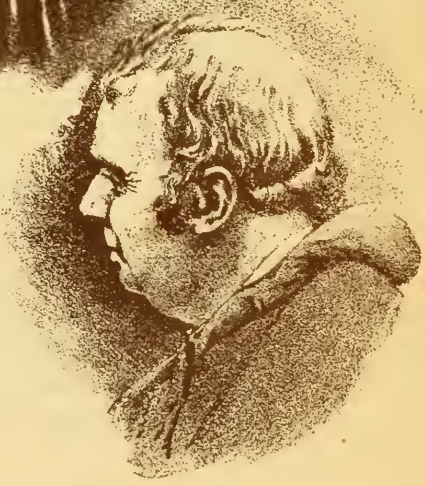
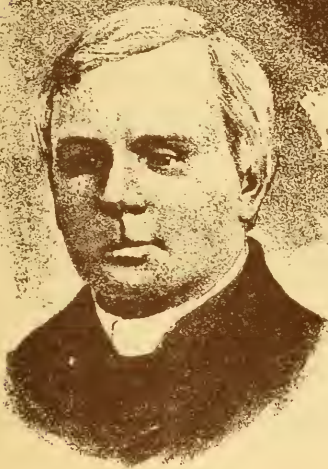
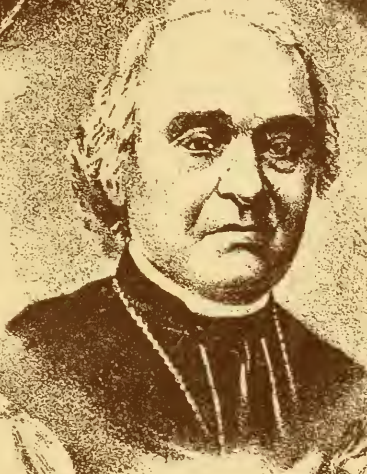
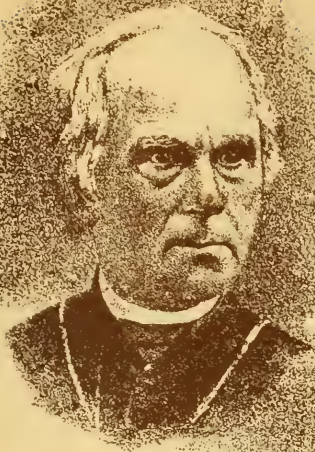
### CATHOLIC MISSIONS





**M** ISSIONARY work among the Oregon Indians was undertaken by fathers of the Catholic Church in the late thirties, and at the end of ten years their converts were numbered by the thousands. The methods employed were such as had been in vogue since the priests of this church had undertaken Christianizing the natives of North America on the banks of the St. Lawrence. By images, pictures, and ceremonies it was thought that the immature mind of a primitive people might be most effectually reached. Much stress was laid upon baptisms, the cross, and the ringing of bells—the latter being invested in the accounts of Father Blanchet with almost medieval solemnity and salvatory influence. The greatest success was attained among the Flatheads, the Cowlitz and western Washington Indians, the Yakimas, and among a portion of both the Cayuses and Nez Percés. That the spirit of these missions was strongly sectarian, and that the intention was to win the Indians entirely from the Protestant faith, to which they had been already, more or less, attached, is not at all concealed in the picturesque accounts given by the priests; and it was the most aggressive order of the Catholic Church—the Jesuits—that began these missions. While it could hardly be regarded as otherwise than unfortunate if the Oregon tribes, or any great majority of the Oregon population, had been converted to the tenets and forms of the Catholic Church—or

at least exclusively so—the efforts of these enthusiastic missionaries brought elements of strength, as well as variety of character to the young commonwealth. A considerable number of the most brilliant and useful men in the country became identified with the Catholic Church. Among these were McLoughlin, Pambrun and Burnett; Le Breton, Foisy, and Matthieu were of Catholic education. The greater portion of the Canadian population, originally Catholic, returned to the forms of their church, and probably found in them a religious element that had not been understood by them in the evangelistic or doctrinal religion of the Protestants. That the effects of the Catholic teaching were more salutary upon the Indians than had been those of the Protestant, as has been contended by a number of historians of this State, may be doubted. The Nez Perces and Spokanes, who had been longest under Protestant influences, remained firm friends to the Americans. The Wascos, although divided in sentiment during the Cayuse War, gave the Americans but little trouble. Some, as Seletza, were fast friends. The Protestant Cayuses, as Isticcus, remained friends. The Yakimas, who were more immediately under the Catholic influence, became resolute opponents of civilization. The Molallas, Klamaths, and Rogue River Indians, and the Shastas of California, who had been left entirely to their native Indian beliefs, remained implacable enemies of the Americans. Judged by this result it would seem, therefore, that the Protestant



#### CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

Bishop A. M. A. Blanchet,  
Pioneer, 1847.

Archbishop Francis N. Blanchet,  
Pioneer, 1838.

Rev. J. B. A. Broniliet,  
Pioneer, 1817.

Rev. Pierre J. De Smet,  
Pioneer, 1840.

Bishop Modeste Demers,  
Pioneer, 1838.



missionaries had the greatest success in modifying the natural aversion with which the Indians would regard the advance of a people whose customs and modes of life were unlike their own.

The first of the Catholic clergy to arrive in Oregon was Father Blanchet, who crossed the Rocky Mountains between the stupendous heights of Mount Hooker and Mount Brown, by the grandeur of whose appearance he was profoundly impressed, and has left in his journal a valuable description. This was in 1838. He undertook work in the Cowlitz Valley, and among the mixed population of French Prairie, the mission at St. Paul du Willamette being one of the most permanent results of his labors. This was the beginning of the large institution at Mount Angel, a short distance eastward.

The pioneer of the Catholic missions in eastern Oregon was P. J. De Smet, of the Society of Jesus. He came from St. Louis in 1841 to the Flatheads, or Kalispels, by whom he was received with great kindness, and within a short time he won their hearts, and one is deeply touched by the generous and humane sentiments of this devoted father. Entering into the feelings of his wild children, and making no attempt to change their nomadic customs, and readily encouraging the belief among them that the presence of the "Black Gown" gave them invulnerability from their dreaded enemies, the Blackfeet, he still persuaded them that the Blackfeet, too, were children of the one God, and gained their consent that he



preach among these their hereditary foes. In 1842 De Smet made a trip to Vancouver with Factor Ogden, and purchased supplies. It seems hardly doubtful that the Hudson's Bay Company sought rather to encourage the Catholic than the Protestant missionaries. In August of 1842 Langlois and Bolduc, also Catholic missionaries, arrived by sea; probably in a Hudson's Bay Company vessel. In 1843 Father Demers, of the Jesuit Society, arrived, with two other priests and three laymen, and established a mission in the Colville district.

In the meantime De Smet returned to Europe and obtained a considerable reënforcement, consisting besides priests, of a considerable company of sisters, a part of whom were destined for the St. Paul mission, recently established on French Prairie, at the place still known by that name, and still a center of Catholic education. He arrived in August of 1844, in a Belgian brig named "The Indefatigable." On reaching the bar of the Columbia, which had been greatly dreaded by all the voyagers, the vessel slipped in through a channel not hitherto known, which was thus first discovered as the South Channel. The course of this vessel was noticed by a party of Americans, among whom was J. W. Nesmith, on a visit to Astoria; but by Shortess, who understood the channels, it was at first denied that a vessel could be in that position, and then declared that if so she would soon run aground. But she continued her course and came over a smooth sea into a calm but unknown

harbor, and the wind failing, dropped anchor at sunset well within Point Adams. The anxious brothers and sisters gathered around the captain and asked when they would cross the bar. "Bah," he answered, "we have already crossed it; we are now in the harbor." De Smet did not forget to refer this to the pilotage of angels, and this is mentioned again and again in his pious musings. In 1847 J. B. A. Brouillet, Vicar General of the Walla Walla, established missions among the Walla Wallas and Cayuses. He was present at Wailatpu the morning after the massacre, and meeting Spalding gave him directions by which the nearly-crazed associate of Whitman might reach his own mission on the Lapwai. Despite this act of generosity, however, he did not forego his friendly relations with the Cayuses, but baptized their children, and deprecated the invasion of their country by the troops of the Oregon pioneer government.

Like many other passages in our early history, however, this awaits further investigation before final conclusions should be drawn. The Catholic Church in Oregon, as everywhere, merits the praise of affording its instructions to men of all races and conditions, and showed a zeal well worthy of the followers of Loyola and Xavier to plant the cross upon the waters of the Columbia.

The following from the report of Dr. Elijah White, of 1843, as sub-Indian agent, in regard to the work of Father Blanchet and associates, is highly appreciative: "The Rev. Mr. Blanchet, and associates, though zealous Catholics, are peaceable, industrious, inde-

fatigable and successful in promoting religious knowledge among the Canadian population and aborigines of this country. Their enterprise in erecting mills and other public works is very commendable, and the general industry, good order and correct habits of the portion of the population under their charge is sufficient proof that their influence over their people has been exerted for good."

A much studied and truly liberal opinion as to the connection between the Catholic missions and the Whitman massacre has been thus expressed by H. K. Hines in his *Missionary History*:

"It should not escape statement, however, that it was only a portion of the Cayuse tribe that was engaged in the fearful murderous tragedy that thus ended these missions (of the American Board). For many years these causes were much discussed. Some writers, among whom W. H. Gray, who was connected with the mission of Dr. Whitman and Mr. Spalding as secular agent from their beginning until the spring of 1843, was most prominent, charged it almost entirely upon the influence of the Catholic missionaries, and what he conceived to be their matured intention of striving to drive the Protestant mission out of the country at any sacrifice, abetted and encouraged by the Hudson's Bay Company, for the purpose of destroying their influence in favor of the United States then going on for the ownership of the country. The consensus of later and calmer judgment, however, has been that, while the presence of the Roman Catholic missionaries in the country, with their always unrelenting and unconcealed opposition to Protestantism, had a strong influence on many of the Indians against the missions and the missionaries, they did not seek nor advise the destruction of the mission in that awful way. . . . After many years of examination, . . . such seems to us to be the most reasonable conclusion."

The complete history of the Catholic missions on the North Pacific Coast, and descriptions of their adventures and characters, will afford a new series to a delineator of the genius of Parkman. Their preference for British control was frank and not concealed, but as stated by Blanchet, their acquiescence in the result was also hearty and without reservation. Their settlements and missions have afforded Oregon some of its best citizens, protection during Indian wars, and their institutions of learning and churches flourish side by side with those of other Christians; and their charities, here as elsewhere, are very great. They enjoy their full share in the strength and honor of Oregon.

## CHAPTER XV

### CONSUMMATION



THE negotiations of the Tyler administration with the British plenipotentiary, R. Pakenham, were terminated by Calhoun maintaining through six conferences, the last of which was held September 24, 1844, that the claim of the United States, both on her own discoveries and acquiring those of Spain, were good to the Russian line, 54 degrees, 40 minutes, and declining to accept the line of the Columbia proposed by the British. These were not resumed until July 16th of the next year, 1845. This was under the new administration, that of James K. Polk, who was elected on the platform of Oregon and Texas. It would naturally be expected that the demand to Fifty-four Forty would be made by Polk. But James Buchanan, Secretary of State, in a lengthy review of the subject, and reaffirming all that was claimed, proposed the line of Forty-nine to the Pacific. His reason for doing so was not to allow that the claim of the United States was not ample, but owing to the acts of his predecessors. "Such being the opinion of the President in regard to the title of the United States [that it was good to all], he would not have consented to yield any portion of the Oregon Territory had he not found himself embarrassed, if not committed, by the acts of his predecessors. They had uniformly proceeded upon the principle of compromise. . . . He has therefore instructed the undersigned to propose to the Government of Great Britain that the Oregon Territory



shall be divided between the two countries by the 49th parallel of latitude from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific; offering at the same time to make free to Great Britain any port or ports she may desire on Vancouver's Islands, south of that line."

To this Pakenham made a long reply, contending that the Nootka treaty did act as a bar to the United States urging the Spanish title, or if her claims were allowed the United States had been an intruder in pursuing her own discoveries, and claimed that the independent discoveries of the British at least equalled those of the Americans. He made the disparaging comparison between the discoveries of Robert Gray and those of Vancouver: "It must be remarked that he [Robert Gray] was a private navigator, sailing principally for the purpose of trade, which fact establishes a wide difference in a national point of view between the discoveries accomplished by him and those effected by Cook and Vancouver, who sailed in ships of the royal navy of Great Britain." He noticed also that the proposal of the free navigation of the Columbia was not made, and the ports on Vancouver's Island would be of no value and concluded by rejecting the offer, saying: "The undersigned, therefore, trusts that the American plenipotentiary will be prepared to offer some further proposal for the settlement of the Oregon question more consistent with fairness and equity, and within the reasonable expectation of the British Government."

To this pointblank and all but discourteous refusal to accept the American proposals, Buchanan on the following day, August 30th, made a vigorous reply, showing that the Spanish claims were not such as to allow settlement or acquisition of territory by British subjects under the Nootka convention, and that this convention had been abrogated by war subsequently to the treaty and not renewed; and that by acquiring the rights of Spain the United States had cured any defects of title as against Spain and reminded the British plenipotentiary that these Spanish rights had not gone to Great Britain, and that the United States prior to the treaty with Spain in 1819 had maintained simply that her rights to Oregon were good as against Great Britain. The United States was therefore prepared to reanimate all the Spanish title and rights and to enforce these along with all that had since been acquired by Americans. He fittingly noticed the distinction that the Briton made between the discovery of Vancouver and Gray, saying, "a merchant vessel bears the colors of her country at the masthead." "Under such circumstances the undersigned is instructed by the President to say that he owes it to his own country, and a just appreciation of her title to the Oregon Territory, to withdraw the proposition to the British Government which had been made under his direction, and it is hereby accordingly withdrawn."

That Pakenham should have refused the offer of the administration without even referring it to his

government, and that in harsh terms, shows how near he felt his country would be to hold Oregon to the Columbia River by forcible means, and how great value was placed upon it. With Buchanan's reply the negotiation was ended.

The bold stand taken by Buchanan was not his own, but Polk's, and much effort was brought to induce the President to propose a modified line. The Democratic party, or the influential element from the South, had cared for the election, rather than for Oregon. They expected to fight Mexico, and did not care to fight England at the same time. Moreover, they probably had a just fear that to bring in so great a territory as all Oregon to the north, whose people had already adopted the ordinance of 1787, would give the free States preponderance of power. But Polk was inflexible. Nevertheless he was soon in a position requiring him to consult the Southern Democrats and the Whigs. The three great leaders of that now departed political organization were Webster in the East, whose Oregon policy, as seen before, under Tyler had all but yielded all of Oregon that she wanted to Great Britain; Henry Clay in the middle South, who had just been defeated by Polk chiefly on the issue of national expansion in the Southwest and the Northwest; and Benton, in the West, who had for nearly twenty years been the champion of Oregon in the United States Senate. These leaders, together with Calhoun and Colquitt, and other senators from the southeast Atlantic States, were ready to stand

together against the extreme claims of the Baltimore convention and the Western Democrats. Benton had never approved the claims made by Greenhow, referring to him somewhat contemptuously and quite unjustly as "a clerk in the department of State"; or of Buchanan, who followed Greenhow's reasoning; and made short work of the Spanish title, and considered that her rights had long since been defunct. and could not be reanimated by the United States. Historically he would go back no further than the lines drawn in 1713, at the treaty of Utrecht, making the line of Forty-nine, indefinitely westward, the southern line of the British claim in America, which had the approval of George III, and was a continuation of what was known as "Oswald's line," defining the boundary which was chiefly followed in segregating Canada in 1763. This line of Forty-nine, moreover, had had the sanction of the three powers, England, Russia, and the United States, in 1824 and '25, and was proposed as the north line of the American claim in the triple division of the territory on the northwest Pacific—south of Forty-nine to the United States, north of this line to Fifty-four Forty to England, and north of Fifty-four Forty to Russia. But altogether beyond fading historical claims he placed the rights of settlement. "We have a better title than that" (the Spanish Claim) he had said to Buchanan long before in the Senate: "We have settled the country." So now he said—as shown in a later speech—"All these offers" (of Monroe and

Jefferson) "leave Fraser's River and Valley to the British, because they discovered and settled it; and all these offers hold on to the Columbia River and Valley because we discovered and settled it. . . . For my part I thought they were right then and think so now. . . . I thought New Caledonia belonged to the British, and thinking so still, and acting upon the first half of the great maxim—asking nothing but what is right—I shall not ask them for it, much less fight them for it now."

The persistent British demand to the Columbia was even thus an encroachment upon ancient right, and an effort to secure, as stated by Dunn, all the best inlets and to be able to monopolize the trade of the Pacific. But the Whigs had no desire for war with England; nor did the moderate party in England wish to fight the United States over what had been described as "a few square miles of territory," which would go to a monopoly not very well liked even in the British Parliament. General regret was expressed in London that Pakenham had not referred Polk's offer to the home government, Sir Robert Peel being among the critics. By Lord Aberdeen, foreign secretary, Pakenham was directed therefore to renew negotiations, and offer directly the line of Forty-nine to the main channel between the mainland and Vancouver's Island, and by the middle of that to the Pacific. That the line Forty-nine would be accepted by President Polk, if offered by Great Britain, had been indirectly



communicated to England through Calhoun and Colquitt.

By the offer, however, when it was made, he was embarrassed in a party point of view, being compelled, if he accepted, to go directly back upon his platform, and acknowledge that the Oregon plank was but a bit of bravado. However, taking Benton into his confidence, he decided to refer the whole matter to the Senate for advice—following a precedent that he found in Washington's practice. It was already known that the Southern Democrats would unite with the Whigs and accept the British offer. The resolution authorizing the President to give notice of abrogation of joint occupancy of Oregon passed the House February 9th, and the Senate April 17th. May 18th Aberdeen directed Pakenham to offer the line that he had hastily rejected, and on June 10th the proposal was made to the President. Advice of the Senate was at once asked, and on June 12th was given, that the British offer be accepted. The treaty was concluded and signed by the President on the 15th, and laid before the Senate the 16th, and confirmed the 19th. Though the " Fifty-four Forty or Fight " faction of the Democrats made strenuous efforts to cast the responsibility back upon the President the combination was too strong, and the necessary two-thirds vote was easily obtained—the ballot standing 38 to 12 for this.

It can hardly be doubted that the question was thus settled on principles of substantial justice. Great



Britain from the days of Drake and through commercial adventures had undoubtedly acquired some rights on the Pacific, both south and north of the line of Forty-nine; the United States had also acquired rights, which were of greater force as the manner of occupation which she maintained, that of actual settlement by families and self-governing communities, was of a much higher and more useful character than by simple commerce and trade. The American rights of discovery extended north of the line of Forty-nine. The British were rightly checked in their effort to gain the principal harbors and inlets of the whole region, and both peoples were allowed by segregation of the Puget Sound Basin, as a part of that of the Columbia, to have an equal chance on the Pacific Ocean, and to extend their influence over this greatest of the waters of the world as they might be able.

The first news of the settlement seems to have reached Oregon by way of the Sandwich Islands, through the British admiral, and was communicated to Governor Abernethy by James Douglas in a characteristic British letter, intimating that England had been actuated by motives of generosity, rather than of forcible pressure, in dealing with his infant son. The letter was dated November 3, 1846, at Fort Vancouver to George Abernethy, Esq. (Mr. Douglas seeming to forget that Abernethy was then governor), and ran:

“ Dear Sir: Very important news for all parties in Oregon has just been received by the barque ‘ Tou-



THE OREGON COUNTRY  
AFTER THE TREATY WITH  
GREAT BRITAIN  
1846

Occupied jointly by Great Britain  
and United States, 1818-1846.  
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Boundary to Rocky Mts. established 1818.

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lon,' from the Sandwich Islands. It appears that the boundary question is finally and fully settled. This intelligence rests on the authority of Sir George Seymour [Douglas is careful to remember an Englishman's titles], the British commander-in-chief, and I think may be relied upon. . . . The British Government has surrendered more than strict justice required; but John Bull is generous, and was bound to be something more than just to his promising son Jonathan, who will no doubt make a good use of the gift. At all events I am glad to see this vexing question settled so quietly. The Hudson's Bay Company is fully protected in all its interests."

The supposition that Oregon was a *gift* from England to the United States was so naïve and so completely suited a Briton's unconscious egotism that it is hardly offensive, although quite amusing; and seems to have been taken in a spirit of entire good nature by Abernethy, who probably did not fail to notice with pleasure the acquiescence of the Hudson's Bay Company in the conclusion.

By the election of 1846 George Abernethy became governor. The Legislature consisted of Hiram Straight, A. L. Lovejoy, William G. T'Vault from Clackamas County; Angus McDonald, A Chamberlain, Robert Newell, Jesse Looney, from Champooic (Champoeg); George Simmons, from Clatsop; Joseph L. Meek, D. H. Lowndale, Lawrence Hall, from "Tuality"; J. E. Williams, John D. Boone, Polk; Thomas Jeffries, Absolom J. Hembree, and Henry M.

Peers, from Yamhill; and Wm. F. Tolmie, from Lewis.

In the election for Governor in 1847 there was a vigorous contest between Abernethy and Lovejoy, resulting in the election of the former by a vote standing 536 to 520. Lovejoy represented the more strictly non-sectarian sentiment, while Abernethy retained the vote of the mission element. A burning question had been that of regulating the liquor traffic; which under the prohibitory law was said to be monopolized and still carried on by the Hudson's Bay Company. A law regulating the traffic by license had been vetoed by Abernethy, but passed over his veto.

The Legislature consisted of M. Crawford, S. S. White, J. M. Wair, Clackamas; A. Chamberlain, W. H. Rees, Robert Newell, W. H. Rector, Anderson Cox, from Champooie; S. Plamondeau, from Lewis; S. Peers, from Vancouver; J. L. Meek, David Hill, R. Wilcox, from Tuality; J. W. Nesmith, N. A. Ford, from Polk; and L. A. Rice, Lewis Rogers, A. J. Hembree, A. D. Smith, from Yamhill.

“The year 1847 was one of remarkable prosperity so far as the material condition of the people was concerned, and as a very large immigration had arrived, and the boundary question had been settled, high hopes were entertained that a territorial government would soon be established by the General Government.” Some disturbances from a number of Molalla Indians at a place called Battle Creek, and also at the Dalles by Wascos, and a general appear-



ance of unrest among the upper river tribes led Governor Abernethy to seek some one to proceed to Washington and lay before the Government the situation and needs of Oregon; to this he was more particularly induced by Whitman. To this mission Judge J. Quinn Thornton was appointed. He hastily accepted the trust, though he had no means to pay his expenses. As the bark "Whiton," Captain Roland Ghelston, was about to sail, a considerable quantity of flour was subscribed by the Oregon people to pay the delegate's passage to California, and to be sold for further means to continue the journey. Very opportunely the United States sloop-of-war "Portsmouth" was found at anchor in California waters; and Lieutenant Bartlett, of this vessel, paying a visit to Ghelston, and finding the Oregon delegate at his journey's end for the present, reported the fact to the commander, Captain J. B. Montgomery, who considered this a circumstance warranting a return to the Atlantic, and conveyed to Boston, free of cost, this first Oregon delegate, or executive agent, that visited the capital. This visit of Thornton's proved very opportune; but not sufficiently early to arrest the trouble fast rising with the Indians.

The immigration of the year was estimated as between four and five thousand persons. A pilot—S. C. Reeves—had been appointed to service on the bar of the Columbia, and ships of considerable carrying capacity had passed in and out with safety. Portland was already founded, in consequence of ships of too



great a burthen to reach Oregon City coming into the Willamette and finding this the most convenient place to load. The "Whiton" was observed to lie alongside the bank, with a scaffolding made of poles from the shore to the gunwales, and upon this extemporized wharf the lading was easily passed to the deck. By J. M. Shiveley, an immigrant of 1843, who had returned east for his family, and was now coming back to Oregon, a communication was brought to the Territory from President Polk, establishing a post office route, and the promise of a speedy organization of a territorial government; action necessary to which had been delayed in Congress by the progress and exigencies of the Mexican War, news of which had reached Oregon the previous season. General congratulation was felt over the settlement of the boundary dispute, and no community had more occasion to rise buoyantly with the prospect of a rapid and brilliant development. Two events, however, coming at almost the same time, tended to distract the young community, and for a time to retard its growth. The first of these was the outbreak of the Cayuse Indians; and the second the discovery of gold in California.

By the first the powers of the Provisional Government were thoroughly tested, and the actual authority in Oregon demonstrated. By the second the center of population on the Pacific Coast was shifted to San Francisco Bay and not until recent years has the valley of the Columbia approached the relative

strength in numbers and commercial activities that she enjoyed in 1847. That this has been a detriment to Oregon will not at all be intimated here; but the fact that from Oregon have gone, beginning with the rush to the California gold fields, very large numbers of those who have peopled and exploited the coast from California to Alaska, has impressed upon the older community something of the conservatism that belongs to the older States.











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